

THE

Nonconformist.

THE DISSIDENCE OF DISSENT AND THE PROTESTANTISM OF THE PROTESTANT RELIGION.

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Ecclesiastical Affairs.

THE DISESTABLISHMENT DEBATE.

HOWEVER sanguine our expectations may have been as to the reception which the House of Commons would give to this great and serious question, they have been amply fulfilled. It is a satisfaction to feel that, whatever may be the treatment of the disestablishment movement elsewhere, Parliament has treated it with all the respect which its gravity deserves. A full attendance on both sides testified to the interest taken in it by all sections of politicians. As a whole the debate was marked by great calmness and earnestness. Being of necessity confined to one evening, it was not possible that many members could take part in it; but those who did "assist" on the occasion were for the most part gentlemen of great weight and influence, the grave and elevated tone of whose speeches gives to our question at once a position in Parliament such as must gratify its most ardent friends out of doors.

We are precluded, of course, from saying anything about the argument of the mover of the resolution. For the rest, and speaking of the whole debate, it was evident that the principle of Establishments—as a principle—was in effect given up. There was not even the shadow of an attempt to claim for the State the right to fix the creed and form of worship of any individual citizen. Sir Roundell Palmer virtually conceded the whole principle when he said, "I quite agree that no State authority should interfere with any man's religious belief, and if in past times such an opinion was entertained, we happily live in times when such interference has long since passed away." It was avowed, as it has been in previous discussions on Church questions, that the creation of a Church Establishment would be impossible if it were now to be broached anew. Nearly the whole answer attempted by the opponents of the motion amounted to this:—"Here is the Church of England; it has been here a long while; it is doing a good deal of work; it has a good deal of money; and though you Dissenters don't like it, the people of England don't want it disestablished just yet: therefore we oppose the motion." There seemed to be an underlying conviction in the minds of all the speakers, and also in the minds of their supporters, that this was about all that could be said for the Church, and that if the nation should come to wish for disestablishment, the Church would have to go, and that it was more than probable that the majority of the people of England would sooner or later make that demand. There was no real attempt to grapple with the main grounds on which the motion was based. Sir R. Palmer did indeed make a show of grappling with the first

charge, that the Church of England had failed to secure that universality and unity at which all Acts of Uniformity have aimed, and for which alone they have been passed. Under cover of smooth and almost honeyed words he granted that this aiming at universality was a piece of tyranny; "founded upon false and impossible principles, arising from ideas entertained in past times when liberty was not known," but then, instead of following the admission to its logical conclusion, and allowing that the institution which was founded upon those impossible and false principles of a dark and despotic age could no longer be maintained, he adroitly glided away into a eulogy of the Church for the "high degree of universality" it had attained, and which, according to his own claim, did not extend to much more than half the nation. Verily it must be a poor case when a highly cultured gentleman, lawyer and poet too, and a most religiously conscientious man, can speak of degrees of universality at all, and expect the Nonconformists of England to be content with their position of inferiority and exclusion for the reason that the half is a considerable proportion of the whole—that whole itself being a thing founded on the impossible and false ideas of mediæval times.

We would be the last to deny that the Dissenters have, as Sir Roundell Palmer asserted, derived much good from the Church, by the reflex influence of her culture and learning. But what has this to do with the question of the Establishment? Would there have been no culture and no sweet influences if there had been no Act of Uniformity? Did that Act create the Church and give to the hierarchy of the clergy their life and being? Were they born out of the womb of an Act of Parliament? Or if not, were they all barbarians like ourselves, till an Act of Uniformity transferred them magically into "sweetness and light"? Or if this be not contended for, then we are at a loss to see what such pleas have to do with the question of Disestablishment.

As was to be expected, much was made of the claims of the rural parishes, to which the mover of the resolution had pointedly adverted, and which constitute the strong case of the Church of England. And Sir Roundell drew a most enchanting Arcadian picture of a model parson with a model parish, claiming for the Church that she is the heritage of the poor. But these Arcadias are not to be found everywhere, and it must be confessed that a very large number of the poor are like Esau, and despise their heritage. But what of it all? Is this injustice to be tolerated on so vast a scale, and a denomination endowed with such enormous national funds, because the Church is on the whole a blessing to the agricultural labourers of England and their families? Indeed, instead of arguing the right of the Church of England to exist as the Establishment, Sir R. Palmer almost made an appeal *ad misericordiam*, and all but avowed his conviction that the principle of endowment had so weakened the spirit of liberality and the sense of duty in the members of the Church that disendowment would be to them partial destruction.

The Home Secretary made what may be regarded as an official speech, in which, judging by its tone and hesitating arguments, there was very little earnestness of conviction. Its chief point was a defence of the Government for not taking up the question, on the ground that the

state of public opinion did not warrant their doing so: implying, of course, the conclusion—of which we shall not be unmindful by-and-by—that when the state of public feeling is so-and-so, it will be the duty of Government to take it up. The speech of Mr. Leatham in favour of the motion was one of great power and plainness of speech, and produced a considerable impression. His reference to the disendowment part of the question was most felicitous, and was in substance this:—"You profess to be a Protestant Church, abjuring Popish errors. You ask to be established on this ground. But you pray to be allowed to keep the money which was squeezed out of dying Papists by Popish priests under the pressure of future pains, and was given for the teaching of those errors which you have previously forewarned."

The speeches of Mr. Disraeli and Mr. Gladstone were equally remarkable for the entire absence of any serious attempt to defend the principle of Establishments, or to refute the main positions of the mover of the resolution. The utmost that the former gentleman could find to say on this point was to express his belief "that the great majority of the House, and the great majority of the country, are of opinion that the State should recognise some religious expression by the people"—a conveniently vague phrase, which means—I have not a word to say for the principle of a State-Church. The Premier confined himself almost entirely to a beautiful eulogy upon the Church as it is, and an estimate of the magnitude of the work of disestablishment.

And now what is the result? Does it justify the action which, after much anxious and careful deliberation, has been taken on this subject, with the sanction widely and repeatedly expressed by a very large majority of the Nonconformists of England? Let us see. Comparing this division with the divisions made under similar circumstances when Parliamentary action was begun upon matters involving religious equality, surely we have every reason to be gratified with the result. Victory we never expected, of course. But we have got much more than, a little while ago, we could have hoped for in our most sanguine moods. But morally the movement has made a great stride. The House of Commons, composed in great part of gentlemen brought up in connection with the Established Church, and accustomed from infancy to regard it with veneration as a sacred thing, and not a few of whom are intimately connected with its dignitaries and ministers; and dispense its patronage, has gathered together, as it does only for great questions, and has listened patiently and respectfully to the statement of our case in its extremest form. Not only our "ulterior views," but our ultimatum has been put before the House, and has received treatment such as befits it. We have been answered, indeed, but it cannot be said the case has been met. The nature of the answer indicates that our case is not likely to be met. Our opponents will not join issue on our own ground, but will insist on tempting us to a field where they have pleasure if not surer footing. They have retreated from the citadel of Establishment, which they used to defend so vigorously and even imperiously, and have left it in our hands, and invite us to see what beautiful pastures have been laid out by the dwellers in the citadel, and appeal to us not to disturb them. Who does not see that such

substitutes for argument as these cannot wear long? If we persist in our demands for justice and equality, basing them on no other grounds than these, such flimsy pretexts for refusal must soon be torn to shreds or worn into holes. True, as they tell us, the little grievances are gone. There which were all we were able to grapple with up till now. But the great grievance remains, which is not in the least degree a sectarian, but a civil grievance. This—that half the nation is just at immense social and civil disadvantage by the favouritism shown by the State to the other half of the nation, on account of a religious and not at all a civil difference. That that grievance is removable is certain. It is only removable in one way—through the will of the people of England. And our task is now to win over that public opinion which is the real sovereign of these realms, as the Prime Minister seemed to challenge us to do at the conclusion of his speech, and undertake “the preliminary work of converting to these opinions the majority of the people of England,” until some statesman on the right hand of Mr. Speaker shall bring in a bill for the disestablishment and disendowment of the Established Churches of England and Scotland.

THE NEW UNIVERSITY TESTS.

It was very obvious, as soon as the evidence taken before the Select Committee of the House of Lords on University Tests was printed, and before the second report of the Committee appeared, what would be the line taken by Lord Salisbury's party. The witnesses—both Churchmen and Dissenters—who were summoned before the Committee were summoned for the distinct purpose of sustaining a case in favour of a test, or of tests, in favour not now of the Established Church, but of Evangelical religion. In very many cases the party represented by Lord Salisbury in that Committee must have been extremely disappointed with the evidence given. Even Churchmen went against them; and although a strenuous endeavour was made to entrap every one of the five Nonconformist witnesses into something like an admission in favour of a religious test, the endeavour signally failed. The cross-examination upon this point of Mr. Reed, M.P., Dr. Angus, Mr. Allon, Dr. Raleigh, and Dr. Stoughton, is well worth perusal, both for the acuteness of the examiners and the equal acuteness of those under examination. Nothing, however, could be got to support the proposal of new tests, while the party of University reform, of whom Professor Jowett was the most conspicuous representative, indignantly repudiated any idea of compromise upon this question. The bulk of the evidence, however, being the evidence of clerical Churchmen who, hitherto, have never believed that either Christianity or their own Church could continue to exist without some “safeguard” of this description, was in favour of a new test. The Committee reported accordingly, and Lord Salisbury's amendments were drawn up in harmony with this report. But by this time, we should imagine, the noble lord must be of opinion that he had better have had nothing to do either with the Committee or with his amendments.

A better, more thorough, or more exhaustive debate upon the points at issue in regard to this question, between the Conservative Ecclesiastical and the Liberal Ecclesiastical party in this country, has never taken place than the debate in the House of Lords on Monday night. It was of extreme interest looking at it only as regards the question immediately at issue, but it was obvious that something more, and far more important, than University Tests was actually under discussion. The Lords had before them not a measure only and amendments upon that measure, but a principle. The actual question at issue was whether, amongst educated men, Christianity could stand alone; whether it could afford to dispense with props, fences, and safeguards; whether something more than its own Divine strength was necessary to sustain and propagate it—in a word, whether the Almighty could be trusted with His own proper strength and with the instruments of His warfare which alone He had entrusted to mankind. Under another guise, therefore, the principle that was being discussed on Monday night was the principle that lies at the basis of all Established Religions, whether here or elsewhere. Does Christianity stand in need of artificial support? Is coercion, of one kind or another, necessary or not? The majority—so small and so dwindling, as to be almost worse than a minority—decided

in favour of coercion and restriction, but, as it is getting to be pretty often the case now, while the numbers were on one side the argument was on the other, and the substantial result of the debate was in favour of unfettered equality.

The Marquis of Salisbury's first and most important amendment was to the effect that no person should be appointed to the office of tutor, assistant tutor, dean, censor, or lecturer in divinity, in any college now subsisting in either of the Universities, until he should have subscribed the following declaration:—“I, A. B., do solemnly declare that while holding the office of — I will not teach anything contrary to the teaching or Divine authority of the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments.” The marquis supported this amendment in a speech of considerable ability, but wanting in the vigour which is usually characteristic of his controversial performances. He made, however, no secret of his views or of his purpose and intention. He considered that the effect of the bill as it stood would be so disastrous that it would banish distinctive religious teaching from the Universities altogether. He gave up entirely the claims of the Church both as no longer maintainable and as of infinitely smaller importance than the other matters that were involved in the issue. “We value,” he said, “the secular rights of the Church, but we treat them as mere dirt compared to securing the supremacy of religion in the education of the young.” He argued that all offices and endowments should be thrown open, without distinction, to all subjects of the Queen, and that even all teaching should also be thrown open to those who agree upon the essential points of Christianity, that is, he said, to ninety-nine out of every hundred. Still, the marquis declared that he did not intend to bring this test to the interpretation of a court of law, or to support it by the agency of a court of law. It was not to be a “legal security,” but “it has a certain weight in the court of honour and conscience.” The marquis, like a new convert, went on to condemn the tests imposed by a past age, but agreed that public opinion had never yet decided the question he had now raised, which was not between Church and Dissent, but between Christianity and Infidelity. His speech concluded with an impressive peroration, culminating in the grand and inspired words that “The fear of God is the beginning of wisdom.”

We did not need this speech of the marquis to assure us that the position now assumed by the test party is assumed with grave earnestness and transparent sincerity. It is not, as has been represented, a last refuge of “bigotry.” It does not come from bad passion, but from simple weakness, want of knowledge, and want of faith. The party represented by the marquis have never had any experience of religion or of churches apart from something in the nature of protection. They have a great fear of the thing which they vaguely call “infidelity,” because they know little or nothing either its origin, its nature, or its various phases and characteristics. They have a great distrust of the native power of Christianity, because they have never, as they think, seen Christianity flourishing without some sort of feeble human support, or what they think to be support. They dread, with a “fearsome dread,” its being left alone, to struggle by itself, as though it was a poor artificially contrived thing which any earthly wind would knock over. They see in their lurid imaginations, England given over to the disciples of Comte and Bradlaugh; all religion extinguished, and they think, poor human souls, that they can prevent the catastrophe which seems to them to be imminent, by a form of words binding upon conscience and honour. We don't sneer at them for this; we simply regret that they do not know a little more of what Christianity is, and what it can do. We respect their conscientiousness, but we tell them—we who have lived in the freest air, without a test or the shadow of a test coming near us, that Christianity can be both felt and realised, and is most operative where it is left without a single so-called protection.

In the debate which followed the Marquis of Salisbury's speech, the weakness of the position which the noble lord had chosen was clearly enough pointed out. Lord Kimberley took issue at once by declaring his confidence in the truth and vigour of religion. Even the Archbishop of York threw the marquis over, and proved that one bishop, at least, shared the faith of the lay nobleman. “I see,” he said, “no hope for religion if this test is to be its only protection.” On these two lines the debate was carried, and ended with a majority of only five for the marquis—71 to 66, and of that seventy-one nine were members of the episcopal bench.

The debate, however, did not finish with this division. The marquis carried the exemption of headships from the operations of the bill by a

majority of eight, which dwindled on what was virtually the clerical fellowships question to a majority of only two. The other clauses of the bill were keenly debated, but no division took place; and so it passed through committee, and will, in due time, come down again to the House of Commons.

There has been a suspicion that the present Government, or some members of it, were in accord with the marquis upon the amendments which he intended to introduce, and which he has now been able to carry, but that should have been the case, the divisions of Monday night will, we should imagine, break the understanding that has been said to exist. Mr. Gladstone is scarcely likely, in his present position, to follow the lead of a majority of two in the House of Lords. He can hardly be mad enough to alienate his followers still further. We do not, for a moment, believe that he will attempt such a course. The House of Commons, at we presume, his instance, will reject the Lords' amendments, and it is to be doubted whether, under the circumstances, the Lords will now insist upon them. In that case, we shall see one great and good measure passed this session; if it should not be the case, we can afford to wait. Whatever may happen, neither the Nonconformist nor the Oxford Reform party will yield one iota of the claims set out in the bill as it passed the Commons. We are none of us fighting for ourselves, or for our own interests, but for the interests of the nation at large, which are identical with the best interests of the purest and highest religion.

ECCELESIASTICAL NOTES.

We had to regret last week that the crowded state of our columns would not permit of any reference to a very interesting conference at Sion College on the relations of Church and Dissent, which we find reported in the *Inquirer* newspaper. A few weeks ago, it will be remembered, the Rev. W. C. MacLagan read a paper upon this subject of a High Church character, submitting in a moderate tone, but with great theological exclusiveness, the terms upon which Dissenters might be received into the Church; the Church being, of course, virtually the High Church party. On the second occasion, the Rev. Joseph Bardaley, a gentleman who will be well known to our readers by name, came forward with a paper extending a welcome to all Evangelical Nonconformists. Mr. Bardaley appears to have spoken with good taste and good feeling. He was followed by a clergyman of another party, the Rev. Mr. Ware. Mr. Bardaley had protested against the Dissenters being styled schismatics—Mr. Ware protested that they could be nothing but schismatics. Here was High-Churchism, to be presently followed by Broad-Churchism, in the person of the Rev. Simcox Lea, who vindicated very earnestly the equal Christianity of all, whether Episcopalians or anything else, who loved the Lord. A Dr. Bunting, a Wesleyan, followed, but does not seem to have added anything to the debate. The Rev. Newman Hall then rose, and asserted, with what we should judge to have been considerable ability, the spiritual qualifications and rights of the Nonconformists. Mr. MacLagan followed, re-asserting his side of the question. Amongst other things, Mr. MacLagan said:—

Let any one read the account of the recent meeting of Nonconformists in support of the Liberation Society, and what was said of the Church of England, and he must perceive that co-operation was impossible. There was a vital difference between them, and it was hollow and futile to deny it. It was not a question of salvation, but of the order of Christ's Church. For himself, God forbid that he should question the salvation of any man; and he could surely believe that Episcopal ordination was essential to the Church without denying the influence of the Holy Ghost outside that Church.

After this Mr. Bardaley replied, and the meeting came to an end. Gratefully recognising the charity with which the discussion was conducted, the many good and soft words bestowed upon Nonconformists, we must adhere to the opinion we have always held, that nothing formal in the way of union can possibly come out of any of these meetings. As Mr. MacLagan said, and said truly, “co-operation is impossible.” It will only be possible when High-Churchmen, Broad-Churchmen, and Low-Churchmen will give up what they and their Church have added to the laws and the customs of primitive Christianity.

To take note of all that is said at the May meetings is simply impossible, but it is equally impossible that all that is said should be passed by. At the meeting of the Bible Society there was quite a fraternal exhibition between a Nonconformist minister and an Establishment Bishop. The Bishop of Gloucester and Bristol occupied the chair, and, said Dr. Stoughton, who moved the vote of thanks—

It must also be a matter of great gratification for them

all to see the Lord Bishop of Gloucester and Bristol in the chair. (Cheers.) Although he had never before had the honour of being in his lordship's presence before, yet he was sure he would excuse him for saying that for some years past he had formed a rather intimate acquaintance with him through the medium of his critical works—(cheers)—and he believed he might say that many Nonconformist ministers besides himself had from time to time derived great advantage from the study of those erudite productions which his lordship had published. He rejoiced exceedingly that in these days he had heard his lordship declare his hearty adhesion to that society. (Cheers.) He also felt under great obligation to him for what he was doing in connection with the Revision Company. He was looking forward to the completion of the labours of that company with very high expectations, and believed that those who were engaged in that work were rendering a service of the greatest importance to the Church of God in this land. (Cheers.) He thought his lordship could tell them that that work, though encompassed with some difficulty, was advancing with as much rapidity as could have been fairly expected, and, further, that those who were engaged in it had found how good and pleasant it was for brethren to dwell together in unity. (Cheers.)

The Bishop in reply said:—

A few last words with reference to the kind expressions, which you have received so kindly and gracefully, of one whom I trust I shall now be honoured by calling my friend. His name is one well known to literature. He has kindly alluded to some fleeting efforts of my own. His own name is enrolled among those of our honoured historians.

There! Why, that is stronger language than either Nonconformists or Establishmentarians often use towards each other. We hope that the friendship now established will take a practical turn and be extended.

We have been reading the report in the *Guardian* of the meeting of the Propagation Society, and have found in the speech of the Bishop of Sydney something also worth noting. The Bishop has been in Australia many years, and he thus speaks of the progress of the Churches under the voluntary principle:—

Speaking generally, he should say that, notwithstanding the abolition of State aid in some of the colonies some years ago, and notwithstanding its more recent withdrawal in Victoria, the Churches of Australia were manfully meeting and overcoming all the difficulties which beset them. Their condition might be summed up in two words—peace and progress. He was grateful indeed to Almighty God that the sounds of war which met his ears the moment he landed in England were not heard in Australia, save through the press. No doubt there were diversities of opinion amongst them, but they had never manifested themselves in such a form as to demand the interference of authority. And the Churches of Australia were progressing. The growth of the Episcopate was itself proof of that; but, he might add, while in the diocese of Sydney sixteen years ago there were but forty-eight clergymen, there were now seventy, notwithstanding the formation of the new see of Goulburn, which had thirty, and that of Bathurst, which had twenty more. He believed there was the prospect of a glorious future. The wise and timely introduction of diocesan synods would, he trusted, be completed by the establishment of a general synod in the course of next year; and then the Church of Australia would present the aspect of a compact, united body of intelligent men, under the government of bishops—he spoke only of his right rev. brethren—remarkable for their ability, their activity, and their zeal.

"Overcoming all difficulties," "peace and progress," and the "prospect of a glorious future," when will the time come when such language can be applied to the Episcopalian Church in England?

We find, in a corner of the same journal, a curious and instructive little bit of information. It may be remembered how, about twelve months since, there appeared an article in the *Quarterly Review* on the Church in Wales, in which the continued existence of the Establishment there was vindicated because of the progress it was making, and especially because of the number of new churches that had been built. The impression intended to be produced by these statements was that the Welsh people were rallying round the Church; but now a Glamorganshire rector writes to the *Western Mail* as follows:—

Will you kindly allow me a small space to direct the attention of my fellow-Churchmen to the position of a society which seems to me to have unquestionable claims on our sympathy and support, but which, I fear, has been too long neglected by a majority of us? I refer to the Incorporated Society for Promoting the Enlargement, Building, and Repairing Churches and Chapels. There is hardly a parish in the diocese of Llandaff that has not, within the last thirty years, received aid from this society in proportion to the outlay incurred in building or restoring its churches. It has been of all societies the most easy to deal with, and one of the most liberal in its gifts. But what has been the return made for favours received? From most of us it has been of a very cold and meagre character—from many, I fear, it has been absolutely nothing. This is not right. It seems to say that our new and renovated churches have failed in one thing—in evoking grateful feelings, and awakening emotions suitable to the reception of disinterested kindness. I had occasion, a few days ago, to support the application of a friend, who, in a mountainous district in the western part of Wales, was undertaking the arduous work of restoring a dilapidated parish church of no ordinary dimensions. My communication received the most courteous acknowledgments of the secretary, with expressions of great regret that the funds of the society would not enable the committee to deal with the case in the manner which it well deserved.

Referring to the work done in past years, and done on a scale which had well-nigh exhausted the resources of the society, he concludes his letter with a short though incisive sentence—"Alas! we meet with little sympathy, in return for this co-operation."

This is the revived attachment to the Church, is it? This is how the Welsh people build their ecclesiastical edifices, is it? This is their enlarged liberality too, and their self-sacrifice for the Establishment, is it? The English Church Building Society has given them the money, and can get nothing for itself in return! We thank this Glamorganshire rector for letting this particular cat out of the bag.

The decision of the Irish Synod to postpone until 1872 the revision of the formularies of the Church, has been followed by a decision that the subject shall actually be brought forward in that year. The proposal was debated with great earnestness, and every now and then with some warmth. This was natural, and it is a healthy sign in any organisation when free speech is not always cold and calculating speech. There is such a thing, not at all too common, as the heart running away with the judgment; but it more commonly happens, now-a-days, that the judgment presses upon the heart with such weight that it can scarcely move, much less have free and healthy play. A little warmth is not "a dangerous thing" in public movements; there is a great deal too little of it. So we take it as a good sign that the differences of opinion in the Irish Church Synod were debated with a moderate heat, out of which, ultimately came light. For the bishops have seen their way to co-operate with the Revisionists, and a thoroughly good committee has been appointed, which, no doubt, will make an honest report next year. The worst feature in this committee is the preponderance of the clergy; but it is generally understood, we believe, that there is a majority in favour of moderate revision. The Synod is now, we believe, debating a new set of canons, which will clearly offer a remarkable contrast to the Canons of 1603. We are sorry, however, to see that rites of burial are still refused to "unbaptized" persons.

It is satisfactory to us to find that there appears to be a considerable extension of anti-Establishment feeling in Scotland. With reference to the motion debated in the House of Commons on Tuesday night, Mr. Treasurer Morton moved in the Town Council of Perth that the Council petition Parliament in its favour. The subject was discussed at considerable length, nearly all the speaking being in favour of the motion, which was carried by thirteen to seven. We understand that the Town Council of Greenock has also taken action. In the Scotch papers, considerable prominence is now given to the disestablishment movement. It would be strange, indeed, if those who first roused English Dissenters to a sense of their duty in relation to this question should themselves now be wanting.

THE DISESTABLISHMENT OF THE BRITISH CHURCHES.

In the House of Commons on Tuesday, May 9, there was a large attendance of members at the hour of public business, and, before Mr. Miall introduced his motion, Mr. Gathorne Hardy deposited upon the table a large roll of paper, and, amid the cheers of the gentlemen sitting behind him, informed the Speaker that it was a petition from Bradford against the motion about to be submitted to the House, signed by 24,700 ratepayers.

Mr. MIALL, who rose exactly at five o'clock, and was received with loud cheers, then spoke as follows:—Sir, my hon. friend the senior member for Bristol, in seconding the Address to the Throne on the first night of the session, gave expression to his hope that in the event of the Universities Tests Bill and the Burials Bill being assented to by Parliament, no more would be heard of "Dissenters' grievances." Concurring with my hon. friend in the hope he expressed, I rejoice that the motion I am about to submit to the House does not rest upon any sectarian or narrow grounds. (Loud cheers.) It involves a matter of high national policy. It concerns the interests of Churchmen quite as much as it does those of Dissenters—and in its range it embraces issues which will affect the condition of numbers of persons who sympathise with neither. I desire to deal with it, on the present occasion, in the full recognition of those facts—and therefore with no special reference to the benefit of

Nonconformity, but simply with a view to the social, moral, and religious advantage of the whole country. As a rule, I am quite aware this House dislikes abstract resolutions. I am not surprised that it should; but I don't see very clearly how the opinion of the House could have been more conveniently tested in the first instance as to the expediency of giving complete effect to the politico-ecclesiastical policy of 1869. (Hear.) To have introduced a question of this magnitude by a bill or bills (for it would have required more than one), would have been an absurd undertaking on the part of any private member—only a responsible Government could have presumed to initiate the question in that shape. But it is to no idle discussion that I invite the House. The object I have in view is a perfectly practical one, namely, to ascertain how far the House is disposed to apply to other parts of the United Kingdom a policy sanctioned by Parliament in its application to Ireland. In seeking to gain that object I earnestly and honestly disclaim all feeling of hostility to particular Churches, as well as to particular Church parties. (Loud cheers.) I wage no war with religious denominations, as such—Episcopalian or Presbyterian. I heartily wish them God-speed in their respective spiritual missions. In this House, I trust, and in my capacity of member, no one will ever hear from my lips any criticism of the religious faith, or of the mode of worship, of the Church to which he belongs. I shall not assail either the Church of England or the Church of Scotland as a spiritual organisation, but I shall attempt to show that the relationship they sustain towards the State, and the position which the State assigns to them, are condemned by experience as well as by reason, and ought to be put an end to as soon as possible. (Hear, hear.) Before proceeding to deal with the substantial merits of the proposition, I must ask permission to say a word or two in justification of my having brought it before the House this session. There is "a time for all things," I shall be told—and the proper time for mooted this question in Parliament is not come. It is much too far in advance of public opinion to allow of its being treated with a view to immediate legislative settlement, and on this ground I may be charged with being premature. Well, Sir, I scarcely need remind the House that the objection has been hurled, I may even say at random, at every change of any moment. (Hear, hear.) Precisely the same charge was urged against certain proposals touching the Irish Church which I submitted to the House in 1856. They were pooh-poohed as premature and unpractical by the front benches on both sides, and in 1869 were adopted by Parliament almost to the letter. I know very well that a bill for the disestablishment of the Church of England has no chance of being passed just yet—perhaps not during the continuance of the present Parliament; but if not, that is no reason for refusing to deliberate seriously on the subject. But I dispute the allegation that public opinion is unprepared to witness initiatory steps towards a settlement of the question. On the contrary, so far at least as my observation extends, those who desire and those who repudiate the object of my motion, alike take for granted that the discussion of it cannot be much longer postponed with advantage. (Hear, hear.) Why, Sir, what are the facts? Can any hon. member so completely shut his eyes to what is going on, not merely in this country but in all the colonies, and in most European States, as not to have desisted the rapid approach of what I may call a tidal wave of sentiment which will presently beat with overwhelming effect upon the union of the temporal authority with the spiritual in the constitution of Governments? To me, I confess, it appears as though the whole force of all the lessons on this subject contained in the history of Christendom were bearing down on public opinion with a pressure it will be wholly unable to withstand. During the thirty years that I have given special attention to the State-Church system, all the main arguments by which it rooted itself in the public mind have been rent asunder by facts—all the theories (from that of grand old Hooker downwards) which gave it a hold upon reason, conscience, affection, have been pitilessly exploded. The Anglican Church, *qua* a State-Church, a Church established by law, a Church lifted by the Constitution into political ascendancy, has now its only *raison d'être* in the past. It continues to stand among us for no other reason than that it has stood so long. Logically speaking, the spring and stay of its life is gone. Well, Sir, an institution of which this may be truly said, lacks the foremost and most indispensable condition of perpetuity. But look at

other conditions. The Church is convulsed by internal dissensions. (Hear, hear.) It must needs become more desperately so in proportion as thought becomes more active, and inquiry more searching, and conscience more energetic; and we know, as a matter of fact, what we should have anticipated as a matter of conjecture, that where differing, and even opposed, schools of theology are dominated by the same legal standards of doctrine and discipline, each will denounce the others as unfaithful, and severe conflicts within will exhaust the strength needed to cope with unfriendly elements without. Then look outside the pale of the Establishment. There are first the various Nonconformist bodies. I will not estimate their numbers absolutely or relatively, because any estimate of mine would be disputed; but nobody will deny that they do not reach a very considerable aggregate, and to all of these bodies the State-Church, in the very nature of things, presents itself in the light of a monopoly, sometimes barefaced and repulsive, sometimes veiled and unobtrusive, but always unjust. Then, glance for an instant at the great wage-earning class both in the large towns and in the rural districts—a goodly proportion too of whom possess the elective franchise. It is confessed on all hands that to the great majority of them the Church has ceased to have any attractions—(loud cries of "Oh, oh!" and "Hear, hear!")—though as yet it may not have called out any very active hostility. Well, Sir, these are conditions which strike me as utterly incompatible with a safe postponement of this question to any distant date. Let it be borne in mind that the problem to be solved is a difficult one; it involves a great number of extremely delicate questions; it is bound up with a variety of social and family interests; and it will need much preliminary investigation by the Government which charges itself with the settlement of it, and a great deal of skill in the handling of it. It seems to me that for the sake of all the parties, and of all the interests concerned, the matter is one which should not be allowed to drift down with the silent stream until it finds itself in troubled waters. It would be nothing short of a national calamity if the changes—the legal changes—which the disestablishment of the Church of England would require, should be set about under the impulse of political terror or popular passion, or, indeed, under any external conditions except such as would allow of ample leisure, cool deliberation, and quiet interchange of opinions. (Hear, hear.) So much as to this charge of being premature from a general point of view. Now let me ask the House to look at the matter from the point of view of those who are outside the pale of the State Church. Is it possible, I ask, for us to shut our eyes to the fact that so long as the Church of England remains part of the Constitution of England, her position will necessarily be taken into account in all our ecclesiastical or semi-ecclesiastical legislation. (Hear, hear.) Had we not proof enough of this only last session? Was not the current of legislation, in more than one or two instances, turned aside—and, as some of us think, very much to the public detriment—by the mere fact that a Church Establishment continues to exist? Nor is this all. Look at the waste of time involved in dealing, year after year, with measures introduced with a view to give freer play to the Establishment principle, or to cure the anomalies and mischiefs it engenders. What lasting good can come of our pottering over an interminable succession of small repairs, when we all know well enough that the foundations of the edifice are being hopelessly undermined by the stream of events? Is it reasonable that we should be asked to join in increasing the difficulties which will have to be surmounted when public opinion shall make the settlement of the question inevitable, or that we should be called upon to create fresh vested interests, every one of which we shall have at last to satisfy to the utmost? These are reasons, Sir, which prevailed with me not to postpone breaking ground on this momentous subject to an indefinite period. As a continuance of the policy of the Irish Church Act of 1869, I might have brought it forward last year, but for my anxious wish to avoid throwing any obstacle in the way of the completion by the Government of its great work of justice to Ireland. I am not sorry that I have let the matter rest until now, but I think I could not have allowed it to remain in abeyance through another session without exposing it to the chance of increased difficulties and dangers. (Cheers.) Let me now submit to the House, as concisely as I can, two or three broad reasons in support of the resolutions I have ventured, Sir, to place in your hands. I take for granted, what I suppose the House will

at once admit, that this is a question which beyond most others has a specially religious aspect. I am not going to discuss it in that light. I agree that, however high the qualifications of this House in other respects, they do not constitute it the fittest possible tribunal for testing the worth of religious opinions. (Hear, hear.) And, to do it justice, the House has usually disclaimed not only its own fitness, but its own inclination, to meddle with religious problems in its debates. Well, Sir, what the House does not wish to talk about, I am anxious that it should not affect to govern. Elsewhere, assuredly, I should contend that this is a question which not merely has a religious side to it, but that the religious side of it is by far the broadest and the most important. At any rate, it is on this side of the question that I find my chief motive for calling the attention of Parliament to it, and I hope the House will forgive me for saying, that it is not because I depreciate this aspect of the question—and far less because I doubt the solidity of the ground it offers me in debate, that I decline resting my present argument upon it. But, Sir, there is one line of observation open to me which I think I may pursue with propriety even in this House. What is the purpose—I will not say the sole, but the main purpose aimed at by giving to the Church a political Establishment? Her prelates sit in the other House, her clergy claim and enjoy a legal and exclusive status, her parochial and other endowments have been assigned to her by law, and her liturgy and Articles have been made part of an Act of Parliament, for the promotion, I suppose, of the spiritual interests of the people. In theory, at any rate—in that conception of it which fired the imagination and kindled the religious ardour of our forefathers—a State Church was an institution set up for the purpose of Christianising all the people of the State. And truly the object they had in view was so grand, so generous, so Godlike, that even we who most emphatically repudiate the means chosen to carry it into effect, can at least thoroughly understand it, and look back upon it with admiration, if not with sympathy. They meant a really beneficent thing when they allied the Church, their best ideal of human goodness, with the law, their highest ideal of human power. In those days they did not reflect that conscience and faith can no more be restrained within limits drawn around them by the law of man, than the dreams of childhood can be preserved under a glass shade. But if they made a mistake in the view they took of the congruity of the two forces—the temporal and the spiritual—and forged fetters for faith and love that could no more touch them than a bullet could wound a disembodied spirit, they aimed, at any rate, at a complete and intelligible result. The National Church, in their idea of it, expressed a national faith. It aimed at securing a national unity of belief, a national uniformity of worship, and a national identity of religious teaching by the clergy; and hence it claimed an exclusive right to employ national resources. All the souls of the nation were taken in spiritual charge by it. All were baptized into communion with it. All were bound by law to receive its teaching, and were met at every turn of life by its ministrations and offices. That, Sir, was the original conception of the Church of England, and all the legal arrangements devised to give realisation to it were of a piece with it; were marked by logical consistency; were based upon the same hypothesis—namely, that there can be no National Church which is not the Church of the whole nation. Well, Sir, in these days we have to do with a state of things wholly incompatible with that ideal. (Hear, hear.) The question left to us for consideration is, whether the meaning, the spirit, the purpose of the old State-Church system having evaporated, we do well to tie ourselves to the dead forms of it conserved only by the machinery of the law. The Church of England is not now in fact, whatever she may be in profession, the Church of the whole people of England. She is the largest of the denominations into which the Christian people of this country are divided, comprising, we will say, half the population as her voluntary adherents and members, and that half for the most part, the upper, the less dependent, and the better-to-do half of society. She can lay claim, with truth, to the bulk of the wise men, the mighty men, and the noble of this land. She lives in the esteem of the wealthy and the respectable. But it can hardly be said with truth that she has taken a proportionate hold upon the far more numerous classes beneath them. She has never—and probably less than ever in our times—overtaken the work which she arrogates exclusively to herself. She claims the whole ground for cultivation, but at least a moiety of that which

comes under cultivation at all, is cultivated by Churches which she will not recognise. She is never likely to cover the whole ground now. She is not therefore a National Church, for she neither does nor can comprehend within her ministrations, her sacramental and tutorial agency, the entire body of the nation. All the resources, it is true, which the nation, as such, has given for religion she appropriates to herself. All the worldly honours by which it means to mark its appreciation of religion, she keeps in her own hands. But she is not the National Church in the sense of being the accepted or adequate organ of the whole people of England, for quickening, nurturing, or giving expression to their religious sentiments. (Cheers.) And after all this statement of the case falls very far short of the facts. The general impression it leaves upon our minds as to what we gain from the Church Establishment in spiritual results would be far more unfavourable if we could analyse those results. Imagine, for instance, if you can, the aspect which the religious condition of the nation would assume at this moment if it could be seen *minus* the part contributed to it by the non-established communities? I invite the House to pursue that thought. What, I ask, would be the result if we were able to distinguish and pull out from the spiritual covering provided for the people of this realm, every thread which had been woven into it by other hands than those of the Church of England, and could parcel it out among separate denominations in such manner as would enable us to say—"So much belongs to the several sections of the Methodist body—so much to the Presbyterians, so much to the Independents and the Baptists, so much to the Catholics!" If it were possible, I say, thus strictly to follow up and measure off the work of each denomination, and to wipe it out from the sum total of religious life and effort in this kingdom, what an astounding discrepancy would be exhibited between the purpose for which the Church Establishment was set up and the actual results it has achieved. (Cheers.) But in truth, even the net sum of good remaining after this process of elimination is not wholly due to the working of the State-Church system. No man can make the admission with more profound satisfaction than I do, that, for something upwards of a generation, the members of the Episcopal Church have been exceedingly active in supplementing the deficient provision made by the law of the land for the spiritual wants of the community. (Hear, hear.) The number of district churches built, and endowed by private liberality speaks volumes for the power and the fruitfulness of religious life in the Established Church. But this expansion of her machinery, it should be remembered, is not due—at least to any considerable extent—to the action of the State. All that the State can be truly said to have done in this matter is that it cleared the ground of some of those legal impediments which it had itself thrown in the way of religious zeal. With very small exceptions that do not materially affect my argument, it did not build these churches. It did not endow them. It does not support them. It has simply absorbed them into the system as "by law established." All the beneficence put forth in achieving these splendid results—for splendid results they are—was put forth by individuals, not by Parliament. The Bishop of London's Fund, for example, owed nothing to the Legislature. The beautiful structures, reared by the munificent donations of the wealthy, both in the metropolis and in not a few of our provincial towns, would probably have been reared all the same, if the Church to which they were made over had been independent of the State. (Hear, hear.) Indeed, the spontaneous liberality of Churchmen, which has thus enormously added to what I may be allowed to call the plant of the Establishment, so far from having been helped by the law, has often been hampered by its restrictive conditions. (Cheers.)—and sometimes, after a lavish expenditure of money, has been grievously disappointed in its purpose, on account of the ends to which it has been legally perverted. Well, now, compare what has been actually done by the Church Establishment system with what it was evidently set up for the purpose of doing, and what is the conclusion at which the comparison points? It was meant to be the Church of the nation; it is the Church of only about half of it. Its nationality is but a fiction of law. The work it took in hand to do—so far as it is done at all—has been largely done by other spiritual communities; and much of what the State Church does by its own agency, is done by shunting its own theory, and adopting that of the churches outside its pale. (Hear, hear.) In all these respects the State Church system, as

such, is proved to have been an egregious failure. It has failed quite as signally in other respects. It was meant to secure unity of belief, uniformity of worship, and identity of religious teaching by the clergy. Well, Sir, I put the question to the knowledge and conscience of the House, "Has it done that?" (Cheers.) Don't let me be suspected of over-valuing these objects. They of olden times, it must be confessed, set a high estimate upon them. But there are two kinds of unity—the one is a manufacture, the other is a growth; one is brought about by legal coercion, the other by insight and love. Compulsory unity of religious profession by every subject of the realm was the aim of the law down to the period of the Toleration Act; forced uniformity of clerical teaching is what the law since then has been content with requiring. I know not which of the two is the profounder mistake. This I believe in my soul: that the Acts of Uniformity which stand upon our Statute Book have done more towards lowering the tone of moral and religious sentiment in this country than any other thing for which the State is responsible. (Loud cheers.) Why do I think so? Because I have faith in the old proverbial saying, that corruption of the best inevitably leads to production of the worst. Sir, religious profession at command—which is intended to stand for the outward and visible sign of religious belief at command—is an unpardonable affront put upon the intellectual and spiritual nature with which the Creator has endowed us. (Cheers.) There are few national calamities more to be dreaded, none which bring with them a more killing moral blight, none which more certainly deprave the higher life of a people, than for the teachers of the nation, clerical or secular,—(Hear, hear)—to be placed by the law of the land under strong temptation to be cowards to their own convictions. (Loud cheers.) The evil effects of it may be seen in the lax tone of society, which is, perhaps, its last result—a lax tone, especially in regard to the sacred ends intended to be compassed by an Established Church. Nobody can deny, I think, that there is a striking contrast between the temper and attitude of the British mind in relation to theological propositions and in relation to those which are scientific. In the pursuit of truth commonly classed under the term "scientific," there is an ardour, an independence, a simplicity of purpose, a conscientiousness in ascertaining and stating results, which to witness is with most men to admire and to revere. All of us give credence—perhaps too implicit credence—not merely to the results of scientific inquiry, but even to the speculative inferences drawn from them. We bow to a consensus of scientific men, even when the conclusions it has sanctioned cut right through the core of our pre-existing opinions. Now, let us suppose that science had been established by law as theology has been. (Loud cheers.) Let us try to imagine a compromise of scientific opinions, contradictory of one another, made three centuries ago, petrified into an unchangeable standard, and protected by statute against the smallest alteration. Let us suppose national endowments to the tune of millions a year set apart to maintain it, the Sovereign bound to confess it, the universities obliged to subscribe to it, and everybody ambitious of being somebody tempted by the prestige thrown around it to profess general concurrence in it. On a supposition of this kind what would have been the inevitable result? Why, Sir, the authorised, the Parliamentary, the national system of scientific truth, would have had crowds of nominal adherents and but few real ones. (Hear, hear.) Inquiry would have been discountenanced, new discoveries of truth would have been discredited and discouraged, and science would have sunk to the low level of becoming a thing to live by instead of a thing to live for. (Cheers.) Well, Sir, does not a compulsory profession of faith in spiritual truth operate in the same manner, and tend to the like disastrous results? Does not common sense, does not common experience, show us that this manufactured and artificial unity of profession—this compulsory adherence to legally prescribed articles of faith, by the authorised exponents of Christianity, tends to anything rather than to a vital unity of conviction? (Cheers.) It tends to deaden conscience; it tends to stifle inquiry; it tends to keep up a semblance of what has no corresponding actual existence; but the one thing which it does not do—the one thing which, in all manner of ways, it prevents being done—is precisely that thing which a law-established Church was instituted to see done. Is it not a fact that this unity of clerical profession prescribed by the Act of Uniformity, is plucked through and through, over its entire surface, by living growths of faith which have been formed underneath it? (Hear, hear.) Who does

not know that the sects in the Church are almost as numerous, and much more discordant, than those that are outside of it? (Hear, hear.) What candid mind does not feel itself compelled to admit that neither in faith, in worship, nor in teaching, does the exercise of authority of law achieve, or even tend to achieve, the unity which it proposes? In all religious respects the system has failed. Universality and unity were the two leading designs which the union of the Church with the State was meant to subserve—universality of the Church's sway over the consciences and hearts of men—unity of belief, profession and teaching as it regards the clergy appointed and endowed to teach them. Sir, political ascendancy has not helped the Church towards either of these ends. It gave her authoritative access to the people, but has not helped her to win their hearts, nor even to secure that testimony to her efficiency which she would have had if it could have been said of her that "the common people heard her gladly." It placed her clergy under legal definitions and restrictions as to their belief and teaching, but it has not suppressed the individualities and eccentricities of form which religious life, when greatly active among the clergy, was sure to take under unnatural pressure. Considered simply in relation to its own purposes, the union of the State with the Church has been a mistake, a failure, and a wrong. ("Hear, hear," and "No.") The House, in its patience, will bear with me,—(loud cheers)—I trust, while I glance—for I can do no more than glance—at another main aspect of the question; one that I sometimes fancy is more impressively realised by those of Her Majesty's subjects outside of the Church Establishment, than by those of them who find shelter within it. It is this—the essential and inseparable injustice involved in lifting one Church from among many into political ascendancy, and endowing it with property belonging to the people in their corporate capacity. (Hear, hear.) Two years have hardly elapsed since the phrase "Justice to Ireland" was the watchword of the Liberal party. (Hear, hear.) What was then understood by "justice to Ireland"?—what, but a policy of conciliation of which the disestablishment of the Irish Church was the foremost item! Well, but how was it that disestablishment was justice to Ireland? What made it justice? I venture to put it to the right hon. gentleman who, to his immortal honour, inscribed this policy on the Imperial Statute-Book, whether, when he called upon the people of England to do justice to Ireland, he did not mean by it that the first indispensable step towards paying the sister country the respect due to her was to relieve her of the burden of a State-Church. (Hear, hear.) What made it a burden? Wherein consisted the essence of the injustice which the British people were rightly called upon to remove? Was it not in this—that that which is the common property of the whole nation—such, for example, as the nation's influence, the nation's authority, the nation's honour, the nation's wealth—cannot be exclusively made over to a part of the nation,—(Hear, hear)—without inflicting manifold wrong upon the residue? (Cheers.) I grant that, in the case of Ireland, there were incidents of aggravation. The disproportion in numbers between the legally favoured and the legally discountenanced sections of the community, and the foreign origin of the Church established by law, gave to the Irish Church an appearance of oppressiveness which was apt to throw into the shade the unjust nature, in the abstract, of the State-Church policy. But, in truth, the wrong done to Ireland consisted in the policy itself, not in its accidents.—(Hear, hear)—for, as a policy, it contravenes men's sense of the respect due to their freedom of conscience and to their individual rights of conviction. But what was unjust in Ireland is unjust here—(loud cheers)—for neither geographical, nor arithmetical, nor accidental conditions can alter the essential justice or injustice of a policy. They may make it more or less cruel, impolitic, or exasperating, but they cannot change its intrinsic character. (Hear, hear.) Now, Sir, the inmost principle of a Church Establishment is necessarily unjust in its operation—or, to state the truth in a form less likely to be controverted—that man suffers injustice at the hands of the State, whom the State places in a position of exceptional disadvantage on account of his religious faith, or his ecclesiastical associations. (Cheers.) Thank Heaven, and under Heaven thank Protestant Nonconformity, this axiom has been engraved indelibly upon the conscience of the British people, that a man's religion is an affair between himself and God—(cheers)—and

that the statesmanship which deliberately sanctions his being molested in the profession or the practice of it rests upon a basis condemned as radically unsound by the most indestructible of human instincts. I shall be asked, no doubt, what there is in the State-Church policy as carried out in these days and in this country, which meddles with a man's freedom of conscience, or places him in an exceptional position, on account of his religious profession. I will give the answer, so far as I can, not so much in that form which would best express the sense of wrong felt by those who are not members of the Establishment, as in that form in which it will be most likely to awaken reflection in the mind of sagacious and high-minded statesmen. Take a survey of the operation of this State-Church policy in its amplest breadth—what does it show you? It shows you a nation sharply divided by law in regard to their religion into two great sections—the one privileged, the other tolerated. It shows you one-half, or thereabouts, of the people of this kingdom condemned by law to occupy before the law an inferior position as compared with the other half—to be tolerated, endured, humiliated in that which they regard as their most incontestable right, and in the discharge of their most sacred obligations. (Hear, hear.) It shows you the lesser half (we will say) of the community beholden to the greater half for their liberty to worship God as conscience may direct them—and, whilst they do so, witnessing the appropriation of resources common to both, to the exclusive support of the religious institutions of the stronger of the two. Don't imagine that the State can draw such an invidious line of distinction as this across the entire breadth of society without permanently deteriorating national character. (Hear, hear.) Don't believe that the law, which ought above all things to be impartial and imperial, can treat one large section of those subject to it with exceptional discouragement in their most cherished and most sacred interests, without leaving on both the favoured and the alighted areas of the community deep traces of its injustice. (Hear, hear.) The prejudice of colour which, not many years back, stained the statute-book of the great American Republic, did not more certainly, even if more perceptibly, give a taint to the tastes, habits, and character of the American people, than the analogous ecclesiastical prejudice sanctioned by law in this country lowers, and to a considerable extent vitiates, the tone of society. (Hear, hear.) It is, perhaps, difficult to say which has been most injured in this respect by the law's partiality and injustice—the party on whom it lavished the sunshine of its smiles, or the party which it has driven out into the cold shade. The moral damage each has sustained differs, no doubt, from that suffered by the other. But the country is the main loser by this kind of thing. (Hear, hear.) With those who look upon it from a foreign standpoint, it loses in reputation, it loses in influence; it loses in the weight of its counsels, it loses in the force of its example—while it has to lament among its own people the absence of that unity of feeling and spirit which would give the cohesion, force, and nerve needed to grapple effectually with the various forms of social evil. What the country has suffered and still suffers from the introduction of caste into our ecclesiastical relationships, it is perhaps impossible fully to estimate. (Hear, hear.) But this is not the whole extent of the injustice perpetrated by the Church Establishment system. Its exclusive appropriation of property belonging to the nation as a whole, in providing for the spiritual need of but a part of it, under whatever specious pretexts it may be done, cannot be made consistent with what is due to equity in the employment of national resources. The working men of England and Scotland, for example, what share have they in the proceeds of that large estate which has been appropriated to the religious teaching they decline? It should be borne in mind that when we speak of Church property, we speak of the property set aside by the nation for its ecclesiastical affairs—the Church being the ecclesiastical, as the State is the political, phase of the entire community. Of this community, those who gain their subsistence by manual industry, including "the hewers of wood and drawers of water" for society, form no inconsiderable part. I say you are doing, not merely Dissenters, but the perhaps still larger class which, I am afraid, may be more accurately styled Absenters, an enormous injustice when you abstract from the common fund a revenue which, when capitalised, would amount to from one to two hundred millions sterling, to provide religious

means for the upper and the richer half of the community. (Hear, hear.) For, really, it comes to this in the main. ("Hear, hear," and cheers.) Divide society in this country into three sections—the upper, the middle, and the lower—and I think it will be admitted that it is to a far greater extent with reference to the lower section, than to the middle and the upper, that the machinery of the Church Establishment has become of no avail. (Hear, hear.) You will say that the machinery provided by the Nonconformists has also failed in regard to this class. (Hear, hear.) I must admit it. I can't deny it—although I can except from the force of the allegation, the case of the Nonconformists in Wales, and to a very considerable extent also that of the Methodists and Roman Catholics in England. But comparing, as a whole, the Established Church with the non-established churches, as to the spiritual grasp they have upon the poor, neither, I fear, can boast of much superiority over the other. There is this great difference, however, in the position of the two. The non-established communities, in all that they attempt for the evangelisation of the lower stratum of society, employ none but their own resources; the State Church—so far at least as it acts as a State Church—employs the resources of the nation. (Hear, hear.) And the chief religious means which are provided from national resources fall to the actual advantage of that half of the community which occupies a higher social position than the other half. I admit this is not an intentional result. But in its effect it is none the less a grievous injustice; because the share which the undermost section of society has in that portion of the national estate which is appropriated by the State Church, does chance to be so employed as to throw nearly the whole benefit of it into the hands of the sections that are better off than itself. From the political injustice inflicted by the system, I pass on to notice the social mischief which it works. The tendency of legislation for some time past has been, slowly, it may be, but progressively, to sweep away class distinctions, and, as far as law can do it, to remove the causes of social divisions and disorders. We all profess to lament them. We have reason to do so. An immense work of social amelioration is waiting to be done in this country. The plague-spot of pauperism calls for all our vigilance and skill to check its spread, and the abject and helpless poverty which lies immediately contiguous to pauperism has little chance of resisting its inroads except by the help of a wisely organised system of beneficence. Outside the action of the law there is almost unbounded scope for the action of voluntary zeal and generosity. One of the great needs of the day is a thorough systematisation of the efforts prompted by good-will—and thorough systematisation presupposes unity of feeling in order to unity of organisation. Well, Sir, the one-sided interference of law with the religious relations of the people goes far towards minimising, if not altogether preventing, this unity of feeling. It too often prevents co-operation in matters in which co-operation would be as easy as it is desirable, and, in other instances, like grit in machinery, hinders its smooth working by the friction which it causes. What a splendid opportunity, for instance, we had last session when we set about framing the Elementary Education Bill! What was it that forced upon us the necessity of putting up with a dual system—in part denominational, in part common? Mainly, I contend, the existence and political power of the State-Church. (Hear, hear.) In America, where law leaves religion to its own resources, no such division of educational agencies has been found necessary, nor will it here for any great length of time after the policy of disestablishment has been carried into effect. This is but a single sample, but every one must be cognisant of the fact that the spirit of exclusiveness born of the Establishment system and fed by the encouragement given to it by the sanction of the law, permeates, more or less, the whole framework of society in this country. A dualistic and divided agency characterises by far the largest proportion of moral, charitable, and philanthropic enterprise amongst us. Almost every village of any size has two distinct sets of apparatus for doing good—the one worked by Churchmen, the other by Dissenters. Every town has its exclusive circles of social intercourse—the one appropriated to Churchmen, the other to Dissenters. Every section of society is thus split up into incoherent parts. Many are the useful schemes that have had to be abandoned owing to the absence of good feeling between the favoured and degraded sects. Still more numerous are those which, from the same cause, are worked inefficiently. Sir, it is a pitiable condition of society, loosening its

joints, and weakening its strength. All parties must take their share of blame for permitting it to continue. But the State is really the most responsible party. By its injudicious meddlings with religious opinions—(Hear)—it has thrown the torch of discord into every corner of the kingdom—(Hear, hear)—and, to an immense extent, has transmuted differences of belief into personal alienation of feeling. ("Time" from the Opposition; "loud cheers," and "Go on, go on.") I come now to the last main consideration of the question to which I shall advert—I mean the very serious disadvantage which the system inflicts upon the Church itself. I will touch but cursorily and lightly upon this point, because anything calculated to throw light upon it will come with more authority from my hon. friend who will second this motion. But I can hardly pass it over without some notice. (Hear, hear.) Sir, it must be confessed that the Church of England "as by law established" has reached a troublous stage of her experience. Seldom, if ever, has her discomfort been greater than it is now. "Without are fighting, and within are fears." Nevertheless, her condition at this moment is infinitely preferable to what it was a century ago. Then, in her political security she gave herself to sleep; and spiritual numbness and torpor overspread her frame. She cared nothing for freedom of action; she wanted only to be let alone. She is in a very different state now. She has a fulness of life too great for the narrow conditions which the law has imposed upon her. (Cheers.) She yearns for more liberty. (Hear, hear.) The atmosphere she breathes is oppressive to her. It always has been so except when she fell into a trance and forgot her responsibility. But now, and especially within the last few weeks, she bitterly realises the fact that she is not free—not free enough to do her own work with satisfaction to her conscience. (Hear, hear.) Sir, she cannot be at once free and established. So long as she remains in connection with the State, the people of this country will always, and wisely, insist upon determining in the last resort what she shall teach, and how she shall worship. There cannot be a Church Establishment—at any rate, there is never likely to be—without some distinct dogmatical basis. The dream of comprehending in one national and State-supported Church all religionists of all denominations, and of providing out of national resources for the authorised teaching of all creeds, and perhaps of no creed, is but a vain dream—(Hear, hear)—"the baseless fabric of a vision"—(Hear, hear)—a beautifully, many-coloured bubble, which bursts and disappears as soon as it is touched by the finger of practical statesmanship. (Hear, hear.) As I said before, the Church cannot remain one of our political institutions without acknowledging the doctrinal and ritual conditions which the law imposes on her. Nor can it be forgotten that recent judgments in the highest court of appeal have narrowed rather than widened those conditions. (Hear, hear.) I venture to predict, moreover, that as the law defines itself more precisely, the authorised exponents of religion who are subject to the law will necessarily become more and more cramped in their position, and more and more interfered with in their work. The system cannot go on much longer. The relationship of the clergy to the civil power is becoming intolerable to those of them who are most in earnest, and is felt by them to paralyse their spiritual power. It will be real mercy, I think, to do by legislation, and therefore simultaneously for the entire body of the clergy, what will require an immense amount of moral courage in any of them to do individually, or even as parties—namely, sever the bond which, even on their own showing, fatally restricts their freedom of action. Another and still heavier disadvantage sustained by the Church in consequence of its connection with the State, may be described in one word, secularisation—secularisation, first in appearance, and ultimately, to a very serious extent, in reality. In appearance—and here I speak far more of the system than of the persons who administer it—because the nature as well as the effect of the union between Church and State thrusts under the public eye the secular, rather than the spiritual, element of it. (Hear, hear.) Somehow or other, the law possesses a marvellous power of converting whatever rests upon it into property—not even excepting ecclesiastical functions, privileges, and even duties. Take, for example, the right and responsibility of appointing to a benefice—that is, of choosing the pastor for a parish. It is property, it has a marketable value—(Hear, hear)—it is advertised in the papers, and is bought and sold every day. (Hear, hear.) Take another example,

which forces upon the notice of the public in a most profane form the seeming subordination in the State Church of the spiritual to the secular. Can anything be more demoralising—anything more destructive of Church religious influence than the mode of appointment adopted in the case of bishops? The *congé d'évêque*, the Royal letter, the assured obedience of the dean and chapter, enforced if necessary by the penalty of *præmunire*, associated as it is with solemn prayer for Divine direction—Sir, it is a playing with sacred things—(loud cheers)—for political and secular ends which is perfectly shocking, and which goes far to paralyse the spiritual authority and influence of the Church. Sir, it would be as useless as puerile to try and conceal from ourselves the fact that a very wide public opinion sees, or thinks it sees, behind this semblance of secularism in the legal arrangements of the Church, something of its actual influence upon her dignitaries and chief rulers. It is certainly unfortunate, that however simple and blameless they may be in their personal life, their anxiety for the well-being of the Church is so loudly expressed whenever her temporalities are threatened, and so timidly and hesitatingly evinced when huge inroads are being made upon her doctrine and ritual. (Hear, hear.) Will any of us soon forget what took place in the other House, when the disendowment provisions of the Irish Church Act were being discussed in committee? (Hear, hear.) No doubt the right rev. prelates thought they were doing the Church a service. If so, it was a saddening illustration of the effect of the system upon their minds. I do not like to describe it in words, nor need I do the bishops that unkindness, for there are but few members of this House who will not remember the sense of pain and shame which it excited in their breasts. (Hear, hear.) Seldom, I think, have the Christian people of this country had to lament a more humiliating manifestation of the secularising tendencies of the State-Church system. Sir, I will not trespass much longer upon the forbearance of the House. I have advisedly restricted myself to three or four selected and salient features of the case, lest by a multiplicity of arguments I should confuse rather than deepen the impression I desire to produce. But I wish to say something of the rural parishes of the kingdom. In each of these, we are told, the clergyman, maintained by national endowment, is a living link between the highest and the lowliest of his parishioners, is a cultivated gentleman, located just where there is, if not the greatest need, at any rate the best opportunity, for diffusing both "sweetness and light," is the fixed centre in the parish of civilisation, of education, of charity, of piety, and I am told that I propose to abolish him and leave the people to fall back again into ignorance and Paganism. Well, Sir, this portrait of the rural clergy may be in the main a true, if somewhat overcoloured picture, in not a few instances, and I do not wish to tarnish it. It exhibits one side of the case certainly, but there is also another, though my argument does not require and my inclination does not prompt me to call attention to it. Why should I find fault with the exquisite polish and beauty of the machinery, when my chief concern is with the kind of work which it turns out. These rural parishes have been in the undisturbed spiritual occupation of the clergy of the Church of England for generations past. Indeed, the clergy have all but undisputed religious sway in them. Ecclesiastically speaking, they can do pretty much as they like. Well, what, on a large scale, has been the result? What are the most conspicuous characteristics of our labouring agricultural population? Do they include "sweetness and light"? (Hear, hear.) Do they include fairly developed intelligence? (Hear, hear.) Do they include a high state of morality? Do they include affectionate veneration for religion? Are these the most prominent features by which the character of our agricultural population is distinguished, and in respect of which they bear away the palm from the inmates of towns? And the discouraging and painful answers to these queries—are they not to be found in blue-books—(Hear, hear)—verified as they may be by minute personal observation? When I am asked what will become of the rural parishes if you abolish the endowments which sustain the parsons, I reply, in the first instance, what has become of them under the assumed advantages of those endowments? But is it fair or reasonable to assume that the abolition of the parochial endowments in these rural districts will be tantamount to the abolition of the clergy? Does the House really believe that it would? If so, I must say that its faith is in direct opposition to most of the facts which

bear upon the case. Take the Principality of Wales, for instance—(Hear, hear)—where very few persons besides landowners prefer the State Church, where the bulk of the population is poor, and in many cases thinly scattered over the face of the country: surely no one will be bold enough to contend that it is by the endowments possessed by the Church Establishment that the Welsh people are kept from a relapse into heathenism. Look at Canada, look at the Australias, look at New Zealand, look at the United States of America—why, Sir, there is hardly a Protestant Episcopalian Bishop in any of these countries that has not borne unhesitating testimony to the sufficiency of Christian zeal and liberality for furnishing the means of religious instruction—(Hear, hear)—and who has not deprecated all idea of going back to reliance on the State for the temporal maintenance of the Church in which they bear office. I could read to the House scores of quotations from passages uttered or written by colonial Bishops bearing out my allegation. And, Sir, this is a result at which we have no right to be surprised as if it were a strange thing. A religion that is worth anything will always contrive to find the means of its own sustentation and culture and extension. It always has done so, except where its elasticity and vitality have been withered by a system of public endowments. England is reputed to be the richest country in the world. English landowners and occupiers enjoy at least a fair proportion of that wealth. For the most part, they profess devoted attachment to the Church of England. Well, Sir, it seems most extraordinary to me that the right rev. prelates of that Church should so loudly and so frequently proclaim their distrust of the readiness of those among whom they ordinarily mingle, and to whom they minister, to do what most other people do—namely, make some sacrifice for the maintenance of their religious faith. Sir, I believe this distrust is a libel on the English gentry. If the chief rulers of the Church of England chose to organise, each one for his own diocese, a sustentation fund for spiritually destitute parishes within it, would it not be more in harmony with their sacred functions than taking every occasion that presents itself to persuade the people of this kingdom, that if the State did not make spiritual provision for the rural districts, nobody else would? My conviction, on the contrary, is, that the disappearance of State endowments would be instantly followed by a rush of voluntary efforts to fill up the vacuum. Depend upon it, that faith in Christianity is not yet at so low an ebb in this country—(cheers)—as to suffer a single village community to remain destitute of the means of religious instruction and Divine worship. It would not be for lack of means, or of liberality, that a deficiency of spiritual provision could befall our villages—it would be, if at all, merely for want of proper organisation. In conclusion—(ironical cheers from Opposition, loud cheers from Liberal benches)—Sir, I implore the House not to look upon the question I have so inadequately brought under its consideration as one of merely speculative interest, and not of serious practical importance. It may appear so to superficial observation just at this moment. But, Sir, it is neither rampant Radicalism nor sectarian fanaticism, but conservative prudence, which counsels us to profit betimes by the lamentable occurrences which we are witnessing abroad. The same causes out of which sprang the political tornado which is devastating unhappy France exist in this country, though in a more latent form. The cloud no bigger than a man's hand is visible on the horizon. It may be some years hence, or it may be sooner than we think, that a stormy conflict of principles relating to social matters will darken and trouble the political atmosphere—but, Sir, it does seem morally certain that through that ordeal which will try the strength of our national institutions to their very foundations we, as well as continental nations, are destined to pass. The worst thing I wish for the Established Churches of Great Britain is that before that time comes they may be safely moored out of the reach of political billows, and beyond the ordinary sweep of political passions. I would have all branches of the Church, which, after all, are united in the same root, fulfilling in that day those functions which are best adapted to exalt men's motives, moderate their aims, soothe exasperation, and tone down popular clamour. And I fear, Sir, I greatly fear, that no Church will be in a fair position to do society this priceless service, which leans, either for her influence or maintenance, upon political support. (Hear.) The first forked flashes of revolutionary fire are sure to be attracted,

and always have been attracted, by political Churches. (Hear, hear.) I would fain see them all rescued from that danger. In their proper and divinely-appointed sphere, they are more likely to be out of the way of man's wrath, and will be better qualified to win man's respect and affection. Sir, it is with a simple view to these great and beneficent results that I now move the resolution which stands on the paper in my name. (Loud and long-continued cheering.)

Mr. J. D. LEWIS: My hon. friend has requested me to second the motion, because he knows that I am totally unconnected with the Nonconformist body. But the fact is, that this is not a question between sects: it is a question between those who, whether they be Episcopalians or not, are in favour of political liberty and a free religion and those who hold an opposite opinion. (Hear, hear.) My hon. friend spoke just now of the piles of extracts which he might have read from the speeches of colonial bishops, but I think that piles of extracts might be read from the sermons and speeches of eminent men in the Church at home, in it as well as out of it, all of which would tend to show that there is a large and increasing number of Churchmen who look upon the separation of Church and State as a policy that is at once wise and inevitable. (Hear, hear.) I have not come to trouble the House with extracts, but I trust I shall be permitted to read a few lines that have been written by a member of the House, the Under-Secretary of State for India. During the long vacation he said, "A conviction is beginning to gain ground among the people in favour of a separation between Church and State. The whole stream of public opinion is going in that direction, and men are coming to the conviction that religion should be settled by men's own consciences, and not by any State machinery." I say that the man who entertains such opinions is with us in his heart, no matter what he may say in this House. (Hear, hear.) My hon. friend has said much better than I can say it, anything that was to be said on this subject; but, nevertheless, I trust I shall be permitted to make one additional remark. I think that the great objection to an Establishment is this, that the Church was originally based on a condition of things which has since been entirely swept away. (Hear, hear.) The leading idea at the foundation of the Established Church, and why it came to be established, was this—I will put it somewhat differently from the manner in which it has been put by my right hon. friend the Secretary of State—it was that the State had a right to dictate to every man as to what his religious opinions were to be. The foot was to be fitted to the shoe, and the man was to take his religion from the State as he took his clothes from his tailor. The State did everything, and we know that in this kingdom all difference of religious opinion was forbidden. It would be impossible to name any more exploded fallacy at the present day. The repeal of the Test Acts, the admission of Roman Catholics and Jews to Parliament, and the disestablishment of the Irish Church, exploded that fallacy. This idea having been given up, it was supplemented by another idea, which was that the State was bound to profess a religion. Now, that is an abstract question which I will not enter into, but I think the House will recollect how it was exhausted, first by Lord Macaulay, and secondly by the hon. and learned member for Richmond in the second reading of the Irish Church Bill. Another thing to be noticed is the great change which has taken place in the condition of the country. In the days of the Tudors, the only two great cities in England were London and Bristol, London being not greater in population than some of the first-class provincial towns of the present day. The various revenues of the Church were then divided amongst the bishops and the cathedral establishments and the parochial clergy. No provision was made for the rise of large centres, such as Sheffield and Leeds, or Liverpool, or Lancashire, with its population of three millions. In these places everything has been done by voluntary subscription, and it is that voluntarism which has altered the character of the times. I am not anxious to detain the House with quotations, but there are one or two points which I must notice; one thing being that the Church has in more recent times undertaken things which were not contemplated at its foundation. The Church was reconstituted at an early period of the reign of Elizabeth, as a bulwark against what was then called Popery. I am sorry to allude to such a subject in a House in which there are thirty-seven Roman Catholic members, including one Minister of State; but the fault lies not with me, but with the system which admits all religions into this House, and at the same time insists that all legislative powers should be given to one faith. I ask whether the Church of England has not been for some time not so much a bulwark against Catholicism as a secession to the Church of Rome. (Loud cries of "Hear, hear.") I know that if clergymen go a little beyond the Thirty-nine Articles, they are sometimes pulled up by a tribunal which also deals with maritime affairs, but that is not always the case. They often act so as to remind us of the old Latin maxim—*quis custodiet, custodes ipso*—who will bring clergymen

before that tribunal for publications such as appear every week? There is one called the *Sunday Friend*, which circulates extensively in some of the western districts, and which states upon its cover that it is supported and patronised by the bishop and all the clergy of the district. This publication openly indicates the following doctrines: the real presence in the Eucharist, the forgiveness of sins through saintly intercession, the divinity of the Virgin Mary, and the efficacy of confession. (Hear, hear.) I am aware, and no doubt shall be reminded of the fact by hon. gentlemen opposite, that after this publication had been some time in existence, a gentleman from Somersetshire called the attention of the Bishop of Winchester to its contents, and the bishop merely wrote in reply that he had withdrawn his support from the publication in question. This was but mild censure. I should certainly have expected from so leading a bishop of the Church of England a somewhat more emphatic condemnation of teaching inconsistent with the spirit of that Church. (Hear, hear.) Very recently also, another bishop, speaking in North Staffordshire, said that although he was bound to obey the law as it had been delivered in the *Purchas* case, he had no intention of enforcing it. Now I ask the House what would be thought of any magistrate who, whilst saying that he felt bound to obey the game laws, announced at the same time that he had no intention of prosecuting poachers. (Hear, hear.) If my hon. friend the member for Leicester were present, I think he would be down on such a magistrate, and would say that much as he deprecated the game laws, he would, so long as they remained the law of the land, prefer to see them properly obeyed. (Hear, hear.) I think that the disestablishment of the Irish Church shows us what ought to be done, and that the best protection for the laity would be for them to obtain a complete mastery over the funds by which the Church is supported. My hon. friend, before he sat down, spoke of the events which are occurring on the continent of Europe. He told us that the tornado which has devastated France was a warning which we ought not to neglect. He pointed to a cloud no larger than a man's hand in the horizon of the country, and also told us that, in times of tumult, popular indignation generally first fell foul of the Church. (Hear, hear.) This may be true. It may be that we are approaching a time when the State ship will require delicate steering. There is a certain class of people who were looked upon by our forefathers as barbarians, but who are rapidly rising to be the governing power in the country. Those people have an awkward and an original way of looking at everything. It does not do to tell them that an institution has existed for a long time. They sometimes think that the reason why it is unsuited to the present day. These people see a vast organisation, including the whole aristocracy of the country, specially patronised by the law, with the two Houses of Parliament to form its supreme council, with twenty-six spiritual peerages at its disposal, with a Government functionary established in every parish, and enjoying a revenue equal to one-tenth of the whole taxation of the country, and yet that that organisation is not followed or believed in by more than one-half of the people. I think it is more like two-fifths of the whole people. Well, it does seem to me that if troublous times did come, such an anomalous institution must be not so much a safeguard of order as a cause of its violation. I should be only too glad, therefore, if the Legislature, by dealing with the matter fairly now, should remove the possibility of future dangers; and the way to effect that object would be to deprive the Church of an ascendancy which is not justified by the character of the time, and which, I think, is dangerous to the good order and tranquillity of the country. (Loud cheers.)

Mr. BRUCE congratulated the hon. member for Bradford on the dispassionate manner in which he had dealt with the question, and trusted the House would adopt the same tone, so that the question might be lifted out of the region of party warfare. He purposed discussing the motion in respect of its opportuneness and also in respect of its subject matter; and as regards the first point nothing could be in better taste than the hon. member's proposal. The hon. member did not pretend to say that public feeling on the matter was so widespread that any Government could successfully deal with it at present, but had argued that the peculiar position occupied by Establishments rendered it necessary to face a matter which must, sooner or later, come before the House. But he contested the accuracy of the inference which might be drawn from the words of his hon. friend when he said that the Government, in dealing with the Established Church of Ireland, intended to lay down any principle with regard to Establishments. The Irish Church was dealt with on altogether exceptional grounds. It differed entirely from the Scotch and English Establishments, because it did not have its origin in the wishes of the majority of the country, and because the people of Ireland regarded it as a badge of inferiority. He was far from saying that even if the Irish Church did have its origin in the wishes of the people other reasons of State policy would not have dictated its disestablishment. But although it was questionable whether the Scotch Church Establishment

did represent the views of the majority of the people of Scotland, and although the question of an Established Church was seriously occupying the minds of the people of Scotland, nothing, he was assured, would be done in the matter until the great majority of the people were in favour of this establishment. With respect to England, the question was far less mature. Although it had been agitated by a society of considerable standing, it was not connected with any historical associations of the Nonconformists, nor any deep-rooted feeling of the people. The Puritans, the ancestors of Nonconformists, though objecting to much that occurred in connection with the Reformation, did not object to a Church Establishment. All through last session, he might add, the great Liberal party was banded with the Nonconformists in the endeavour to remove many of those grievances of which they justly complained. He knew, indeed, of no cry which had so much united that party as the cry of civil and religious liberty. (Hear, hear.) But had they, he would ask, during that time, put it forward as a principle of civil and religious liberty that the Church should be disestablished? His hon. friend had opened his speech by alluding to a statement which had been made by an hon. gentleman who enjoyed in the highest degree the respect of the Nonconformists throughout—he meant the hon. member for Bristol—who said that, so far as he saw, there remained only two of the grievances of which the Dissenters had to complain to be remedied—the law relating to burials, and that concerning the admission of Dissenters into the Universities. Those two questions were, however, now under the consideration of Parliament, and he did not think the Nonconformists had any reason to complain that they had been received with any want of sympathy. It did not of course follow that because there had been no agitation among Nonconformists on the question of the disestablishment of the Church it was not worthy the attention of the Legislature. It was impossible, indeed, for any fair-minded man to deny that there was a great deal of truth in many of the statements which had been made by his hon. friend the member for Bradford with regard to the unsatisfactory performance of its duties by the Established Church, or not to admit that in several respects it fell short of the theory on which it was founded. The Church was once, in fact as well as theory, the Church of the whole people, but, from one cause or another, some of the causes no doubt being connected with the failings and shortcomings of the Establishment itself, a very large portion of the community had become alienated from it. Those who had thus separated from the Church had beyond doubt done much to keep alive the spirit of religion in this country, and his hon. friend was perfectly right in saying that if the work of religion performed by the Nonconformists and Roman Catholics were subtracted from the whole amount an enormous gap would appear. The practical question, however, for the House to consider was whether they were for those reasons prepared to pass a resolution which would bind them at once to legislate on the subject. No Government would, he thought, be justified in undertaking such a task in the present state of public opinion. The calmness of his hon. friend in dealing with the question would, he was afraid, not be imitated by the country at large, and its discussion must lead to great dissension and controversy, although in the end the result might tend to promote peace and harmony. It was a subject on which no Government should attempt to legislate without the assurance of success. (Ironical cheers.) He was speaking without reference to the present or any other Government, and he must repeat that no Ministry would be justified in proceeding to deal with a question of such great importance without some assurance of success. ("Hear, hear," and a laugh.) It was the business of private members to ventilate such questions, and the duty of the Government to take them up only when public opinion declared it to be expedient. Although, he might add, there might be many shortcomings on the part of the Church, yet the Government were not unconscious of the great work which she had performed, and it was, he believed, the opinion of the great majority of the people that her work would not be efficiently done if the Establishment were taken away. He felt sure that the Church, notwithstanding some jealousy and dissatisfaction, was deeply rooted in the affections and respect of the great body of the nation. (Hear, hear.) There were, indeed, good reasons why that should be the case. By means of the Church a number of educated men, abounding in good works, were circulated among the people, whose beneficial action hardly any voluntary aid could supply. The Church, too, afforded greater securities for freedom of conscience than were given by any other religious body. He had, he must confess, listened with astonishment to the statement of his hon. friend, who at one moment told the House that the Church had failed in her duty because of the dissensions to which she gave rise, and in the next contended that she was so cramped by law that progress on her part was completely restricted. His hon. friend compared the advance made by science and theology, asking how science could have made such progress as it had done if its professors had been bound by statutes and Acts of Parliament. It must, however, be borne in mind that science was essentially progressive, and that its interest, as long as the world lasted, must go on increasing. Theology, on the other hand, was in its very nature stationary—(Hear, hear)

—the relations of God with man standing now in the same position as they did 5,000 years ago. Theological problems might, no doubt, continue to exercise the ingenuity of men of various degrees of intellect as heretofore, but the solution would probably in the end differ little from that which had long since been arrived at. But when his hon. friend spoke of the Church of England as being opposed to free discussion on religious questions, did he mean to contend that the members of any Christian denomination outside would be allowed to maintain principles so divergent from one another as were held by distinguished leaders of opposite parties in the Church of England who still continued to be members of it? (Hear.) He understood that cheer, but he maintained that in a free country like ours, and in an age of speculation such as the present, liberty like that to which he had just adverted was a great advantage. Bossuet, as is well known, came to a conclusion as to the falsehood of the Protestant faith, because of the great variety of views entertained by its members; while Milton, on the other hand, in one of the noblest passages in English prose, took credit for the earnestness and fidelity of that religion as exhibited by the outcome of various sects and denominations manifesting itself in the most terrible times. He, for one, should always regard it as one of the great recommendations of the Church of England that she admitted within her fold men of varied opinions, and that she exercised only in extreme cases the power of restriction. His hon. friend had said that though much good, which he had no wish to deny, was done by the Church of England, yet there was no proof that the same amount of good would not be done if the Church was disestablished. No doubt it was very difficult to meet an argument of that sort. He could not, for instance, undertake to say if the Constitution of this country were changed and a Republic substituted for a Monarchy, that the people would not prosper, that riches would not abound, that literature would not be cultivated, and this country would not be a great country still. But we were not likely to make such a change without strong reasons, or when there was not a strong demand for it. That was the very case of the Established Church. He was not prepared to defend her with any abstract arguments. He knew that our colonies, our own very children, had proved that they could keep religion alive without establishments. (Hear, hear.) It was only justice to his hon. friend to say that through Europe and the civilised world the tendency was to connect less and less closely the State and the Church, and although his hon. friend had not been able to point to any State of considerable magnitude in which the Church had been dissociated from the State, yet such was the tendency of human thought and progress. Therefore, he would be the last to contend that the Church ought to be maintained because she was the Church of England. She could be maintained and justified only so long as she could justify her existence by her own good works. (Hear, hear.) In his opinion there was on the part of the majority of the people of this country a strong aversion to see effect given to motions such as that proposed by his hon. friend, and therefore he could not accede to it. He did not blame his hon. friend for raising this important question. It was well that it should occupy our minds; it was well that those who defended the Church should have their minds recalled to what constituted her strength. But at the same time, as prudent men, they must decline to make changes the results of which they could not foresee to be good; they must decline, at any rate, to accept a motion which would only plunge them into a barren and profitless controversy. (Hear, hear.)

Sir ROUNDELL PALMER: I am very happy to state my entire agreement with so much of the speech of my right hon. friend as did justice to the tone and spirit in which this question was introduced to the House by the hon. member for Bradford. I think from the point of view in which he approached the subject nothing could be more worthy of the dignity of the question, or of his own convictions, or more consistent with the respect which I have no doubt he entertains for the convictions of others, than the whole temper and manner of his speech. Nor do I deny that such a subject, when we see it canvassed out of doors, should, by those who hold the opinions of the hon. member, be brought under the notice of the House. I deeply regret, however, that there should appear to be any cause for its introduction to our consideration. I would far rather have preferred that the general feeling of the country, as I believe it to be, should be so well understood and acquiesced in as to make it unnecessary to consider the matter. But when we see considerable bodies connected—I won't call them with agitations, for that is a word that might not be acceptable—but with movements out of doors for the purpose of influencing public opinion on this subject, and when we see also within the House itself some under the influence of what I hope to be temporary irritation and excitement, appear to give some acquiescence to the same views, I cannot pretend to deny that the question should be brought under our attention. There is one point of really great importance on which I believe myself to be at one with the hon. member for Bradford. I quite agree with

him in thinking that the religious aspect of this matter is the most important, although it is one which neither on the one side nor on the other can be directly dwelt upon in this House. I further entirely agree with him in some of the main principles which evidently actuated his mind, though I wholly differ from him in their application. I quite agree with the hon. member that no State authority ought to interfere with any man's religious belief. If in any past time such an opinion was entertained, we are happy to live at a period in which it has long since passed away. If such a principle were really involved in the maintenance of an Established Church, I should probably have been found in company with the hon. member. (Hear, hear.) But I disclaim utterly the notion of being a member of a mere political Church. (Cheers.) I believe with the hon. member that it is a thing impossible for this nation. The Church, were it not as truly and really a religious society, held together by religious bonds, depending upon religious faith and religious convictions, as it is a society in possession of certain temporal advantages, neither could stand, nor, in my opinion, would it be worthy to stand. (Cheers.) But being and always having been truly a religious society, resting upon the basis of religious belief, religious doctrine, and religious worship, and there being in its present relations with the State as really and truly a recognition of the spiritual character of the Church as of the temporal authority of the State—all their mutual relations being embodied in the solemn compacts of Acts of Parliament on the one hand, and Church formularies on the other—as long as the Church maintains its vitality, as long as it exercises its powers with the liberality and the general public benefit which it does, and is as acceptable and useful to the people as it is, so long I trust and hope that neither on its own side will it be ready to give up the means of doing good which it possesses through its relations with the State for the sake of any supposed advantage arising from greater independence in some respects, nor, on the other hand, that the State, for the sake of giving effect to theoretical arguments and removing discontents founded upon those arguments, will deprive itself of one of the most valuable allies for all purposes of good government and well-doing throughout the country, which, in my belief, ever has existed in any nation in the world. (Cheers.) Now, I will endeavour briefly to follow the course of argument of the hon. member. The first article of his indictment against the Established Church was that it had failed in the two points of not attaining to the universality which it professed, and of not accomplishing the unity of belief which it was supposed to require. With regard to the profession of universality, that was evidently founded upon false and impossible principles arising from ideas entertained in past times. So far from feeling that the Church in that respect, viewed rightly and truly, has failed in its intended mission, I maintain that it could in no other way whatever than under the influence of those principles of liberty which have put an end to the notion of coercion by the State have attained to that degree of universality—and a very high degree of universality, I take it to be—in its beneficent operations to which it has attained. No doubt the hon. gentleman bore testimony to those principles of liberty which existed in the Church notwithstanding its connection with the State. He said that it would continue to live and be powerful, although it might be deprived of the advantages of State connection, and he pointed to all the great things which had been done by the private liberality and bounty of members of the Church of late years, to the large sums raised to endow churches which had been built in town and country, and to everything else which showed signs of a vigorous life. By these means no doubt the influence of the Church has been maintained and extended from year to year and from day to day. And that influence is being maintained and extended more and more over a portion of the population greater beyond all comparison than any other religious body in the country pretends to reach. I do not pretend any more than the hon. member to give the exact statistics; but we all know we are not very far from the truth when we say that the professed members of the Church number at least as many as the professed members of all other religious bodies put together. (Hear.) But does the influence of the Church stop with those who are directly conscious of it? Suppose you had the old machinery of a universal Church, and everybody was required by law to be a member of it, do you imagine that the country would be really and truly as affected for good as it is at present by the influence of the Church? I say confidently that the Dissenters themselves are affected for good by its influence. (Hear.) The hon. gentleman has so fair and candid a mind that I am persuaded he thinks so. I am sure he would be ready to admit that the Church, doing so much with zeal and energy, has given a powerful stimulus to the energies of the Dissenters to work side by side with her in the different parts of the country. (Hear.) The high education and character of the clergy of the Established Church have told not disadvantageously upon all who are endeavouring to supplement the work of the Church. I do not attribute very much to external things, and yet they are indications of what is going on within, and of the action and reaction and influence of different bodies on each other. I go through a town, and I ask, "What is that beautiful church which I see erected there?" It is a work of architecture on which great sums have been expended; it has spires reaching to heaven. I am told that this church has

been erected by the bounty of some eminent Nonconformist. It is a Nonconformist church, the architecture of which is very like ours. (Cheers.) I am told that although they do not confine themselves to any liturgy, there are not a few churches of the Dissenting bodies in this country that to a great extent are indebted to the beautiful liturgy of the Church of England. (Hear.) I believe that there is very much community of feeling between the most enlightened and best men of both sides, for the tendency of time as it goes on, in spite of all these political agitations, is to bring them more together. (Cheers.) I cannot at all believe what was said by the hon. gentleman as to the relations of the working classes and the Church of England. (Cheers.) In the first place, he did not appear to me sufficiently to distinguish between the position of the working classes in the towns and the working classes in the country. With regard to the working classes in the country, I believe, speaking generally, they are members of the Church, and through the Church they are partakers of benefits of every description, spiritual, moral, and even temporal. I think there is much sweetness and light even among those labouring poor to whom the hon. member referred. (Cheers.) The best light is that which is the light of life, which makes men contented, virtuous, and happy in the position of life which they occupy, and if that position be humble, without many superfluities or any excess of comforts, then I venture to say those who know the rural districts of this country will bear testimony to the existence of multitudes upon multitudes of poor people who have in them both sweetness and light. (Cheers.) There is among them an abundance of those virtues which I honour and which I wish were to be found in an equal degree in the classes above them. (Cheers.) I do not wish to speak against any class, but I must say that the class of all others which has attracted my sympathies according to the opportunities I have of observing them, is the class of the poor, and not least of the rural poor. (Hear.) I cannot imagine any institution to which this character of the labouring poor is due more than to that which has placed in the centre of the population of every part of the country a man educated and intelligent, whose business it is to do them good, whose whole and sole business is to take care of their souls as far as by God's help he is enabled to do so, in every way and in all circumstances of life to be their friend and counsellor. In proportion as he does that work, he does a thing of inestimable value. I admit that if we had not that institution we could not now create it. But we are not going to tear society up by the roots. (Cheers.) This great institution does a work of inestimable value over the whole land and in every part of society. We have inherited it from our ancestors. My hon. friend—I hope I am at liberty to call him so—wishes for certain theoretical reasons to destroy the whole of the immense machinery by which all this good is done. He says we ought to destroy it, and trust to the future to supply its place. Do not let it be supposed that if the Church were disestablished, the means of which it would thereby be deprived would not to a large extent be supplied. But that would be a work of difficulty and time. It is perfectly true that from the enormous increase and aggregation of the population in our large towns neither Dissenters nor Churchmen are overtaking the want of spiritual instruction, but I do believe this, that the Church is overtaking it much faster than the Dissenters—(cheers)—and that not through the fault of Dissenters, but through the advantage which the Church has. The organisation of the Church system gives more means and opportunities of overtaking the very poor, who can do nothing for themselves, than any other system which yet has existed. The Bishop of London's Fund has been doing a great deal towards overtaking the wants of the metropolis, and it is so not only in the metropolis but everywhere else. On behalf of the poor, on behalf of the working classes, I protest against our sacrificing to theoretical argument so priceless and valuable an institution as the Church which is their inheritance. (Cheers.) The hon. gentleman said that formerly all people in this country were expected to have one belief, and one of his arguments in favour of disestablishment was the differences on religious questions among the members of the Established Church. I believe that the general operation of the system of an Established Church is to increase individual liberty, especially in the clergy. I do not believe there is a religious body in the country which does not call its ministers to account in matters of doctrine. To compare this question and its progress with the growth and advance of scientific truth is, to my mind, to use a question not at all apposite. The one is a system of inquiry founded upon observation of phenomena, as to which results have been accumulated in the past, and progress is being made continually, but that is not so in regard to religious truth. I am far from saying that in religion advancement and improvement are not possible; but I do say that you cannot make new discoveries in religion—(Hear, hear)—that the tendency of such progress as is actually made will rather be to destroy what was in past times supposed to be scientific theology than to construct new scientific theology for the future. (Hear, hear.) It has been said that religion came from one source and theology from another, and though I cannot adopt the statement literally, I suppose the meaning of it is that in what is called theology there are many inventions of human science, falsely so called, which are obstacles and not helps to the simplicity and purity of religion. (Hear, hear.) That being admitted, would it not be better that

the human intellect should rather seek and find its highest and noblest field of labour in removing from religion the incrustations of false science in past times, rather than in attempting to invent new religions in the future. (Hear, hear.) For another reason the analogy does not hold. You do not found Churches of scientific men, but it is in the nature of religion to form aggregate Churches with laws and systems of doctrine which they enforce upon their members with more rather than less strictness than is the case with Churches which are not established. (Hear, hear.) Coming to the argument from justice, I cannot adopt the idea of the hon. member, who seems to suppose that no State institution intended for the public good can be just which everybody does not equally participate in. I do not know where that doctrine would land us, and I would rather not inquire, because such views, if adopted, would inevitably lead us into communism, or some other system of the kind. (Hear, hear.) A recent writer on this subject looks forward to the time when there will be no Kings, Parliaments, elections, or anything of the kind, but the men best suited to govern are in some inscrutable manner to find their way to the top of society, and to take their proper place. (Laughter.) These views seem to me to be entirely impracticable, and the attempt to put them in force would involve universal confusion, which means universal injustice. (Hear, hear.) In what, after all, does the supposed injustice of the present state of things consist? It is simply that a body consisting of a large portion of the community should remain in possession of property which for public purposes it has had possession of for centuries, although those who do not participate in the benefit derived from the property fail to do so from simple choice. (Hear, hear.) I should be very glad, as a member of the body which is in possession, if those who so decline would make up their minds to become participators, but it is too much that they should wish to deprive others of what they do not want and would not have themselves. It is quite clear that concurrent endowment is not the object of those who do not like to see us in possession of the property. (Mr. Miall:—"Hear, hear.") But I should be sorry to base the arguments against the proposition upon the low ground of property, and I will, therefore, examine some of the reasons alleged for bringing this motion before the House. My hon. friend said he did not like to put this question upon a sectarian basis, but, in my opinion, it is undeniable that the rivalry of different denominations is at the bottom of all this movement. (Hear, hear.) It is not that they really desire the property of which the Church is possessed, or that they feel that injustice is done to them because the property is so disposed, but because they have in their minds a strong dislike for what they call ascendancy, but which it must be borne in mind is no longer an ascendancy involving any civil rights, privileges, or advantage whatever. (Hear, hear.) I would now say a few words on the suggestions that have been made in regard to social discords. I suppose the hon. gentleman thinks there would be less discord if the Church were disestablished, but I cannot think he was happy in his illustration derived from the Parliamentary proceedings of last year. (Hear, hear.) I cannot for a moment imagine that if the Church had been disestablished we should come any more easily to accord upon the education question. (Hear.) Supposing the Church had been disestablished at the time, there would have remained the broad division between the religious people of the country, who make it a principle to have religion as an element in education, and the Secularists, who would prefer that religion should be eliminated altogether. That distinction would still have remained, for it does not depend upon the existence of an Established Church, and therefore the difficulty in regard to education would have remained as great as ever. Further, let me remind hon. gentlemen who share the opinions of the hon. member for Bradford that they would not get rid of the Church of England by disestablishing it. (Hear.) So far from its being less energetic in the assertion of its claims, it would, in my opinion, be more energetic than ever in asserting such claims as it put forward last year when demanding a recognition of the religious element in the Education Bill. (Hear, hear.) I do not mean that the Church would be less zealous in good works, but rather that, being entirely emancipated from the control of the State, and enjoying perfect independence of action, the tendency to sharp conflict of opinion between the Church and Dissent would be infinitely greater than under the present system. (Hear, hear.) The effect of the existing state of things, to use a familiar phrase in a manner not at all derogatory to religion, is that the Church is bound over to keep the peace, and this I hold to be advantageous, for it is always desirable that asperity of feeling between religious bodies should be checked as much as possible, consistently with the sincerity of the belief in religious truth held by those bodies. One of the advantages, therefore, of a union which subsists between Church and State is that it gives to the former an inducement to act in a more liberal and conciliatory spirit than can be relied upon if the relations between the two were different. (Hear, hear.) I should like to say a few words upon the internal discords and the growing impatience of legal control, which recent events may be said to have shown to exist within the Church. I am sorry that any discord should exist anywhere, but the inconsiderable divisions of opinion now under considera-

tion possess the compensating and preponderating advantage that they are instinct with life and activity which communicates itself with advantage to the religious life of the community—those more extreme differences of opinion to which the hon. member referred only prevailing, in my opinion, among a small section of the religious community, the majority remaining on the whole faithful to the general platform of the Church to which they belong. (Hear, hear.) To those who are impatient of legal control I would take the liberty of saying that in my opinion it is utterly impossible for any Church, whether established or not, to rid itself entirely of such control. (Hear.) It is somewhat strange, I must say, to hear hon. gentlemen pronounce that to be intolerable in 1870 which was found necessary not only before but ever since the Reformation. From the Reformation down to the present time the Church has had its laws defined and confirmed by Acts of Parliament and its tribunals nominated by the Crown. (Hear, hear.) How would it be possible for a Church having its uniformity secured by Act of Parliament, and having the obligations of its ministers sanctioned by Act of Parliament, to be carried on otherwise than under the supremacy of the law as administered in the Courts of the Crown? (Hear.) It has been so from the time of the Reformation downwards, and if the Church were disestablished now it would be exactly the same. I do not mean in all the circumstances of the case, but in the principle it would be exactly the same. As long as Churches have property you cannot, by any possibility, prevent disputes about the terms on which it shall be held. And it has been my lot to be concerned professionally in settling the differences of a religious body—the respectable body of Congregationalists commonly called Baptists—upon what we should presume to be pretty nearly a critical point of their system—namely, whether or not baptism was necessary to justify a Baptist minister in treating a person as a communicant, and the Court of Chancery decided that it was not. ("Hear, hear," and laughter.) And I believe the court decided in a manner which has been acted on ever since, that baptism is not indispensable among the Baptists. (Cheers and laughter.) I do not in the least degree mean to imply anything theological; it would be most unbecoming in me to do so; what I mean was that among the Baptists, as in the Church of England, there are different parties, some thinking one thing and some another; that they do not agree as to whether a particular thing is necessary or not to be done or held by the minister. And then the question arises as to whether the minister, differing from some of his congregation on a given point, has a right to hold the pulpit and continue his ministrations in that church. Accordingly they come to the Court of Chancery to decide; and so should we have to act if we were disestablished now. Let no man delude himself with the idea that as long as men are citizens of the State, and carry on the services of religion, they can escape from the obligation of being governed by the laws of the land. The law of the land cannot impose upon persons the necessity of believing one doctrine or the other. If the law of the land rules questions in which they, as members of a particular Church, are concerned, contrary to their consciences, they, of course, can leave that Church; but they never can by any possibility escape from the necessity of submitting to some control on the part of the law. And with reference to those clergy who have been made uneasy because uniformity of ritual is enforced in a sense in which they did not expect, or in a manner more strict than they expected, I cannot but think that the majority of them will agree that the principle of obedience to the law is of infinitely greater importance than any form of ritual whatever, and that, at all events, they must feel that points of that sort must go for interpretation to the law. Certainly they will agree that they cannot obtain independence by means of disestablishment, and for my own part I think the effect of disestablishment would be that points of ritual would be ruled more strictly against them by the Legislative Assembly of a disestablished Church than as a general rule they are likely to be by the courts of law. (Hear, hear.) One word as to foreign dangers. I agree that we live in times when difficult and important disputes are going on, but it seems to me that the circumstances of this country are very different from the circumstances of the foreign countries to which the hon. gentleman has referred. I cannot but think that we are now as we have been in former times, and that motions which would convulse some other countries would, from our free growth of liberty, be settled by us without the dangers which the hon. gentleman has foreshadowed. Certainly, as far as the suggestion goes, that if such dangers were to arise the Established Church would be overcome by them, I am not quite sure that anything much worse would be likely to happen to her under these circumstances than what the hon. member wishes to do to her now. (Hear, hear.) I cannot refrain from making a quotation from Cowper, which I have made before in this House, embodying some very excellent advice:—

I hold it, therefore, wisest and most fit
That life to save, we leap into the pit.

Certainly, it is a ludicrous suggestion, that, in order to avoid the dangers which may occur if these difficulties arise, we should have a revolution in advance and disestablish the Church. The view I take of the effect and usefulness of the Established Church is that it is one of our great safeguards against these dangers. I have seen what I believe to be an

rroneous report of a speech of an hon. friend of mine in which he represented to have said that nothing was or ought to be sacred to an English Liberal. (Cheers and laughter.) I do not suppose there is any Liberal on this side of the House who will adopt that sentiment, nor do I believe it ever fell from the lips of my hon. friend; I hope we shall never see the time when such a sentiment will rule any party. But in reality I do not think that there would be much difference between the hon. mover of this question and myself upon this point—that as property is the material religion is the moral bond of society. Of course he thinks that moral bond would be stronger and not weaker if the Establishment were put an end to. I cannot see it in that light. One great and most vital means by which that moral bond operates upon society at the present time in this country is through the medium of the Established Church. I value the bond much too highly to be willing to run any unnecessary risk with reference to the means, and I cannot but think that if our country were threatened by those political dangers, the dissociation of the State, represented by so powerful a body as the Church, from its present connection with the whole of the country would deprive the State of much of the strength it now possesses to withstand that description of danger. I would conclude by using the words of a great man who was by no means a bigot, who early in his life was very strongly attached to the Church, a poet of large and liberal mind, and join him in the expression of an intelligent wish:—

Hail to the State of England! and conjoin
With this a salutation as devout,
Made to the spiritual fabric of her Church!
Founded in truth, with blood of martyrdom
Cemented; by the hands of freedom reared,
Decent and unimproved. The voice which owns
The majesty of both shall pray for both,
That, mutually supported and sustained,
They may endure, long as the sea surrounds
This favoured land or sunshine warms her soil.

(Cheers.)

Mr. RICHARD said: Sir, I must at once draw a broad line of distinction between the Church of England as a religious institution and as a political establishment. I can say for myself, with unfaltering lip, that I am not conscious of the slightest feeling of hostility to the Church of England in the former capacity. (Hear, hear.) As a religious institution the Church of England is deserving of the respect and veneration of all Englishmen. She has had a long and, in many respects, an illustrious career. In times past she has done great service to the cause of Christian and Protestant truth, and whether established or disestablished I believe the Church of England will continue long to render the same service if she is faithful to her best traditions. She has had a continuous succession of learned and pious men, whose writings have adorned our literature, to whom I willingly, for one, acknowledge the extent of our obligation for her influence over the mind and the heart. Her working clergy in this great capital and other large cities, do not scruple to dive down into the lowest abysses of misery and crime and ignorance. All these good deeds which render her worthy of honour and respect, I acknowledge with open heart and cheerful lips. But the question which we have to discuss to-night is not the merits of the Church of England as a religious institution, but her position as connected with the State; for in that capacity there are many passages shameful and dishonourable to her history; and I believe, Sir, that in the interests of the Church itself it would be of great advantage if separated from the present connection with the State. Only let us look at the relation which the Church of England bears at this moment to this House, and can any earnest Churchman regard it as either satisfactory or pleasant? Session after session we have been discussing measures relating to the Established Church, and it was only stated the other day, in the debate which arose on the Lectonary Bill, that last year there were fifteen or sixteen measures before Parliament relating more or less to the internal affairs of the Church. This session we have had before us the Lessons Bill, regulating the Lessons of the Church, and I must own that I felt shocked when I first opened that bill, that we should be called upon to consider and decide on the character of hundreds of passages of Scripture; for there was nothing, Sir, I apprehend, in the rules of this House to hinder any member from raising a discussion on any one or all of those passages of Scripture. I felt shocked, I say, at the unbecoming position of having to come down here to discuss the merits of these passages of Scripture, and yet that was what we were really asked to do—to decide for the Church and the clergy what Lessons, what passages from the Bible they should or should not read in their churches on Sundays and holydays. (Hear, hear.) It is wholly inexplicable to me how members of the Church of England can submit to such a state of things. If the Church to which I belong had in matters of doctrine and discipline been subjected to the tossing to and fro of sacred things on the floor of this House, I certainly should have shrunk from it with inexpressible repugnance. And what was the course of the right hon. gentleman the member for Oxford University (Mr. G. Hardy) whom I always listen to with respect,

not from his high position and great ability alone, but from the amount of earnestness in his character as a Churchman, and I respect an earnest Churchman as much as I do an earnest Dissenter. The right hon. gentleman felt, no doubt, as I have often felt and recoiled from having these sacred subjects submitted to the discussion of this House, but what was the remedy of the right hon. gentleman? He appealed to the large body who did not belong to the Established Church; he appealed to the English Nonconformist members of this House, to the members for Scotland, and to the members for Ireland—Presbyterian and Roman Catholic—to abstain from taking any share in discussing these questions, which concerned the members of the Church of England alone. (Hear, hear.) Cannot he see the absurdity and anomaly of the position involved in such a request? For what did he ask the House to do? That a considerable portion of the representatives of the people should abdicate their functions as legislators, in order that the Church of England, while continuing to be a Parliamentary Church, might be relieved from the embarrassment and unpleasant consequences resulting to her from that character. (Cheers.) But, Sir, I rose principally for the purpose of giving some illustrations of the working of a State Church, drawn from the history of its operations in that part of the United Kingdom with which my own observation has been more intimately connected; I refer to the Principality of Wales. Now, what is the object of an Established Church? For what is a certain body set apart? Why are special privileges assigned to it? why are large endowments secured to it by law, for what purpose, if not to be the religious instructor and guide of the people? (Hear, hear.) Well, Sir, if they have failed in that, is there any further reason for their continued existence? It was admitted by the right hon. gentleman, the Prime Minister, in answering the motion of the hon. and learned member for Denbigh (Mr. W. Williams) last year that it was true that, as regards the Church in Wales in the beginning and towards the middle of last century, Wales had fallen into a very sad and neglected state in religion and morals. But it was pleaded that it was from the time the British Government began to send down English bishops to Welsh dioceses, the Church deteriorated, and that through the alienation of the revenues and abuse of patronage, general corruption grew and prevailed. But in that case it was the power of the State that crushed the Church; that power without which, as the hon. and learned gentleman tell us, religion cannot live in the land. (Hear, hear.) But then it was said that when the Church was ruled by native prelates, they were revered by the people, and cared for the people. That is a fancy picture. No doubt the practice of appointing Englishmen to Welsh bishoprics, and of filling the churches with English clergymen, their relatives and friends, on whom the highest dignities and best livings were conferred, no doubt this was an injustice such as is not shown in the annals of any other country. I admit that the Welsh Church has been monstrously treated for many generations, but when Churchmen come, and make these evils as an excuse for inefficiency, I ask them, Whence have these misfortunes fallen? They say that the Church has suffered gross injustice, and that the alienation of the revenues, and the appointment of unqualified persons to all her offices, and the neglect of native talent, and the flagrant abuse of patronage and the laxity of godly discipline, have caused the decay of the Church in Wales. But all this has come from its connection with the State. But, I submit that, from the very first, the Protestant Establishment failed to fulfil its professed mission of teaching the Welsh people. Let me give some facts in proof of this assertion. It must be admitted freely on all sides that the first duty of a Protestant church was to give an adequate supply of the Sacred Scriptures to the Welsh people in their own language. Well, then, see how the Church in Wales has fulfilled its duty in that respect. For a period of seventy years from the settlement of the Reformation under Elizabeth, for a period of a hundred years from the separation of Britain from Rome, there were no Bibles accessible except in the cathedrals and churches. And how did the Church act in relation to a translation of the Scriptures? In 1563 an Act of Parliament was passed ordering this work to be done. It was enacted that the Bible and Book of Common Prayer should be translated into the Welsh language, and the Bishops of St. Asaph, Bangor, St. David's, Llandaff and Hereford, were appointed to see it done by the year 1566, under a penalty of 40*l.* each if the work of translation was not accomplished by that time. Did they do this? It was twenty-five years later, or in the year 1588, that the first translation of the Bible in the Welsh language was issued to the people, and it was not done then by the bishops, but through the piety and the patriotism of the humble vicar of a small parish in Denbighshire, Rev. W. Morgan, for which his name is held in honour and reverence. For the next half-century from that time there was only one edition of the Bible furnished by the Church, and that was the large folio, for use in churches; but during that same time there were 30,000 copies of the whole Bible, and 40,000 copies of the New Testament, published by the Nonconformists, although at the time they were the object of great and incessant persecution. (Hear, hear.) With the exception, indeed, of three folio editions proposed for use in the churches, and amounting altogether to only 2,600 copies, I cannot find that the Church did anything towards providing the Scrip-

tures for the people of Wales till the year 1718; so that for 160 years from the settlement of the Protestant Reformation, and for 145 years from the passing of the Act of Queen Elizabeth the Church of England in Wales did absolutely nothing to provide the use of the Bible for the common people in the country. (Hear, hear.) Well, Sir, and what did she do in other respects? Let us take the case of the churches she has provided for the instruction in religion of the people. In a pamphlet published some time ago by a clergyman, the Rev. W. Morgan, he states the number of churches and chapels belonging to the Church of England in Bangor and St. Asaph. In 1560 the number was 318; in 1855 it was 366, showing an addition of only 48 churches in 295 years. He further states that during a period of 140 years—from 1715 to 1855—there was no increase at all, but a diminution of one church: for in 1715 the number was 367; in 1815 it was 366. (Hear, hear.) Now compare the provision made in Wales between the years 1801 and 1851 by the Church of England and by the various Nonconformist bodies. In 1801 the number of Church of England sittings in North Wales was 99,216; of all other denominations 32,664. In fifty years the population increased from 352,765 to 412,114 persons, or about 63 per cent. To have kept up the ratio of sittings to population, the Church of England ought to have supplied 62,505 fresh sittings, whereas she did supply only 16,614; and the other denominations ought to have supplied 20,576, whereas they did supply 217,903. (Cheers.) In other words, the Church of England fell short of her duty by 73 per cent., and the other denominations exceeded it by 960 per cent. (Hear, hear.) In South Wales, in 1801, the Church of England had 133,514 sittings, the other denominations 82,443. The population increased from 288,892 to 593,607, or 105 per cent. The quota of additional sittings required from the Church was 140,854, but she provided only 15,204; whereas the other denominations, which ought to have provided only 86,275 additional sittings, actually did provide 270,510—(cheers)—so that the Church of England fell short of her duty by 89 per cent., and the other denominations exceeded it by 211 per cent. (Hear, hear.) Well, in the speech of the hon. and learned member for Richmond, it was said that if the Church was severed from the State, the rural parishes would be in a state of utter spiritual destitution. But in the case of Wales, I have a completely satisfactory reply to that assertion. (Hear, hear.) There, as I have shown, the country was neglected by the Church; yet while the people were abandoned to ignorance, superstition, and vice, there arose a few earnest men who had been themselves, I must admit, members of the Church of England—(Opposition cheers)—but who were expelled from her on account of the excess of their zeal for the spiritual good of their fellow-countrymen. (Cheers.) They therefore became Nonconformists, and on seeing the position of their countrymen, they set to work to provide the means of spiritual instruction for them; and I will venture to say that there is now a more perfect system for the religious instruction and worship of the poor Welsh people provided by themselves, out of their poverty, than in any other part of the United Kingdom, and perhaps in any other part of the civilised world. (Cheers.) Let me give an illustration of a purely agricultural district. I speak of Cardiganshire. According to the census of 1851 the result of the inquiries made into the religious provision for the people was this (I am referring to the registration districts). Its agricultural population was 97,614, and the number of sittings provided was sufficient for 97·8 per cent. of the population; of which the Church of England provided 27·4 per cent., and the Dissenters, 70·4 per cent. (Hear, hear.) So that in that county, which is purely agricultural, and where the population in many parts is very sparse, and mostly very poor, you will find that by the operation of the Voluntary principle they have provided this ample supply of the means of religious instruction and worship. (Hear, hear.) I may be told that I am referring to evil days that have passed away, and that since then a great improvement has taken place. I admit it gladly. (Hear, hear.) I admit that the three bishops who have recently occupied three of the dioceses of Wales, although Englishmen (I omit the appointment recently made by the Prime Minister), have exerted themselves diligently to endeavour to infuse some degree of life into the Welsh Church. (Hear, hear.) But, after all, what has been done? I will take the case of the diocese of Llandaff, it is the most favourable, and where the excellent bishop has been indefatigable in his endeavours to do good. This diocese contains Monmouthshire and a large part of Glamorganshire. There has been a more rapid stride of population there than in any other part of the United Kingdom, for the population has more than tripled in half a century. The increase in Monmouthshire between the years 1801 and 1851 has been 244, and in Glamorganshire 231, per cent., whereas the average increase in Great Britain was only 93½ per cent. (Hear, hear.) The bishop, in his last charge, gives an account of what has been done since the year 1850, and he said that thirty-nine new churches had been built and thirty-six old ones had been rebuilt and enlarged—or a total of seventy-five. And how was this done? He says that it was done by the liberality of the landed proprietors and the employers of labour, who have become more conscious of the responsibilities attaching to their position, and that many of them had contributed largely. But what does that prove? It proves, not the

necessity for an Established Church, but the efficiency of the voluntary principle; for all these churches were built, apparently, by the free-will offerings of the landed proprietors in that district—(Hear, hear.) But let us compare with it what was done during the same period by the various Nonconformist bodies. Since 1850 the Congregationalists have built sixty-eight new chapels, and have restored and enlarged forty-six of the old ones. The Baptists have built sixty-seven new ones, and have enlarged forty. The Calvinistic Methodists have built fifty-five new chapels, and have enlarged forty. So that the Nonconformists have in that diocese built 186 new chapels against thirty-nine built by the Church of England, and have restored and enlarged 127, against thirty-six by the Church. (Cheers.) Now, I put it to the House, what would have been the condition of this vast population, which has been growing with vast rapidity in Wales, if it had been left to the tender mercies of the Church of England? (Hear, hear.) It was admitted by one of the bishops that, but for the exertions of the Nonconformists, Wales would have been in a condition of positive heathenism. (Hear, hear.) I think this is a state of things which ought not to continue. It is a state of things to which I object. (Hear, hear.) First of all, on account of its absurdity. What can be more absurd than to maintain, as you have done in Wales, a costly and elaborate machinery to do work that is never done?—(Hear, hear.)—which it is not doing now—and which there is not the slightest probability that it ever will do, and which work is being done far more effectually by another and totally different agency. (Hear, hear.) Secondly, I object to it on account of its injustice—for is it not injustice when a poor and scattered people so utterly neglected for so long a time by the Church, and when they have made for themselves such ample provision by voluntary efforts, is it not unjust that they should have to bear the burden of another Church, which is not doing the work of instructing them in religion? (Hear, hear.) I object to it, thirdly, because it tends to disturb and poison the social relations between the different classes of the people of that country. (Hear, hear.) I believe there is no people in the world better disposed to live in harmony among themselves than the Welsh people. It was my misfortune to be called upon to bring to the attention of this House, two years ago, certain proceedings that had taken place in Wales after the last election. I described to the House how notices to quit had fallen on the tenant farmers, "like a shower of hail," as one of my correspondents said, and although, after that discussion, many of the notices were withdrawn, yet many were carried rigorously into effect. There were more than 100 persons who were turned out of house and home for no offence, except that they had dared to exercise their own understanding and conscience in the giving of their votes. (Hear, hear.) But what was at the bottom of it all? I believe that the Church of England was, for it was proved that, I believe, in every instance the victims were Dissenters, and those who did the injustice were members of the Church of England. (Hear, hear.) Now, there is no dispute of any importance existing among the various classes in Wales, except this—that the landowners are generally members of the Church of England, and they have got it in their heads that it affects their honour and reflects upon their character that the tenants should be of a different religion from themselves, and they conceive it to be their duty to attempt to draw or drive them back into the Church. (Hear, hear.) On this account I say that the existence of the Church, so far from being a bond of union, is the cause of dissension between the various classes of the community, and therefore I should rejoice if, in Wales at any rate, it was severed from the State, if only to restore among us the unity and concord which I believe would then be restored. (Hear, hear.) I disclaim the imputations that are sometimes made against us, because we advocate the separation of the Church from the State. We are accused of wishing to destroy the Church of England. I utterly deny that charge. (Cheers.) I have no wish to destroy or to injure her. (Cheers.) On the contrary, my calm conviction is, that the day when the Church of England shakes herself free from these trammels will be to her as life from the dead. Disembarrassed from the restraints now put upon her by her connection with the State—freed from these exclusive and invidious privileges which excite hostility; relying no longer on the precarious support of the State, but on the love and liberality of her own children, and on the blessing of her Divine Master, I believe that the Church would rise to a higher position, and would go forth to do her great work clothed with a nobler dignity, conscious of a diviner power, destined to achieve far more illustrious triumphs than she has ever yet achieved; and none will rejoice more cordially than the Nonconformists of England and Wales in all the triumphs which she may win in the cause of our common Master. (Loud cheers.)

Mr. SCOURFIELD strongly opposed the motion.

Mr. WATKIN WILLIAMS said: I desire to state the reasons why I shall give my vote in favour of the motion of the hon. member for Bradford. I understand that the motion involves not only the disestablishment, but the essential accompaniment of the disendowment of the Church; and I for one—for reasons in which many hon. members on the other side of the House will agree with me—prefer to see the Church established as it is at present by the

State, if it is to continue to be endowed. It will be remembered that last session I brought forward a motion for the disestablishment of the Church in Wales; and I then gave a notice of my intention to renew that motion during the present session. When I did this I certainly did not expect that my then motion would be so soon followed by a proposition for the disestablishment of the Church throughout Great Britain; but recollecting and appreciating as I do the indulgence the House showed to me last session, I did not venture to bring that motion forward this session side by side with that of the hon. member for Bradford. I felt that it would be asking the House too much to put two motions of the same kind before it. I desire, therefore, on this occasion to give my earnest and considerate support to the motion brought forward by my hon. friend. I must say that I support the proposition with feelings in one sense very different to those expressed by the proposer and some of the supporters of the motion. I feel that some of the arguments in favour of the establishment of the Church fall with very considerable weight, and I wish to say a few words in reference to several of those arguments. First of all I must observe that one advantage of the Establishment is that it secures to the members of the Church a certain amount of liberty and freedom from ecclesiastical tyranny and dogmatism, and there is no doubt that the Church does this. (Hear, hear.) I suppose it will not be denied that no free Church would be tolerated which carried divergence of opinion as far as is the case in the Church of England. (Cheers.) This I freely confess is an undoubted advantage, and I am one of those who believe that the Church was established in this country, not for its own benefit, so far as its ecclesiastical position is concerned, but for the benefit of the State. (Hear, hear.) I feel the argument which has been addressed to us, that if the Church be disestablished, what its friends most fear for, is not the interests of the Church alone, but for the interests of the State, and I certainly have had considerable misgivings myself on this subject more than once. If for one could feel thoroughly convinced that in the disestablishment of the Church there ever would rise up in the state one great and general religious body full of power and enthusiasm, and earnestness, and reality, I certainly should consider the question twice before I would sever so powerful a body as the Church from the State. And I avow this at once, because I do not wish to be supposed to have overlooked this in coming to the conclusion as I have done, that it is desirable for the interests of the country that the Church should be severed from the State. It is said that if the Church were severed from the State, it would be undoubtedly for the benefit of the Church. I wish to give every possible effect to the opinions of my Nonconformist brethren, but I must declare that I do not follow them in this. (Cheers.) I myself have considerable doubts whether, if the Church be disestablished, it will be for the good of the Church in the sense in which we ordinarily understand the term. I think, on the contrary, it is very likely that it may result in schism that would divide the Church into two or three different sections, and if I might enter upon anything so venturesome as a prophecy, I should venture to prophesy that the Church would be divided into two or three sections immediately, and, further, that this might in many respects damage the social position, as it is called, or the temporal position of the Church as an institution and a power in the State. I am not at all prepared to say it is clear that the Church would benefit in this sense by disestablishment. And further, I do not quite understand why the Nonconformists should so completely disclaim their desire to see the Church less powerful than it is; because if they believe, as they must do, that they are in the right, and that the Church is in the wrong, why should they wish not to humiliate the Church? I say that this goes against the support of the motion, and I wish to put myself straight on this subject, particularly with those who sent me here. But then I say further that that which influenced me very much in the conclusion I have come to, that disestablishment is a right thing to bring about is, that if it should turn out that upon the severance of the Church from the State and the deprivation of the Church of those adventitious aids which she derives from her association with the State, the Church cannot hold its ground. I confess that my opinion is that it ought to be disestablished for that reason. (Laughter.) My argument is that unless the Church embodies what is the accepted religion and the people at large, and has the power of maintaining herself on terms of equality with every other religion, that circumstance of itself is sufficient to disentitle it to the adventitious aid derived from the State. There is also another argument which has been referred to to-night, and which has not been acceded to. It is that in the present position of the Established Church and the endowments she holds throughout the country, the country has the advantage in the rural districts of a body of clergymen who are highly educated persons, and who bring to the congregations the benefits arising from a superior tone of thought and feeling and cultivation. This, it is said, is of great advantage to them; that it is an undoubted advantage that they should possess clergymen who are capable of elevating their minds and giving them higher feelings and inspirations. This argument is certainly a very

captivating and taking one; but I believe, from my own observation in my own country, Wales, that the argument is practically not a true one—and for this reason: the grown-up people will not submit to be taught in matters of religion by persons who are regarded in that sense as their superiors; they will only listen to and be guided by persons who are, to some extent, in sympathy with them, who are not too far in advance of them, and who, to some extent, partake of their own prejudices and imperfections. (Cheers.) My experience has been that whilst country people in Wales, as a matter of fact, will listen with attention and reverence to their local preachers, who are persons considerably in advance of themselves, but possibly not so well educated or cultivated as the clergy, that while they will listen and attend to these persons, and be influenced by them, they will not listen to the more cultivated and educated country clergymen. I am in favour of disestablishment, because I think it is wrong that the religion of any denomination should be endowed permanently out of the property of the State. (Hear, hear.) I think that its results are seriously disadvantageous both to the religion and to the peace and quiet of the country. The reason why I hold that opinion is this: that it is, and always has been, the tendency of all religions to stereotype the thought and opinions of the people. The very assumption that you have arrived at the absolute truth on any subject, tends inevitably to this result, viz., to stereotype and fix public opinion to the standard of the given time. Now that might be very well, if you could be sure that you really have arrived at the absolute truth, and that succeeding generations would have nothing to modify or alter in it; but we must all admit that it is the ineradicable nature of the human mind to change—I do not use the word progress—from time to time, and, therefore, any attempt to fix the beliefs of one generation, or to insist upon their passing current in all generations to come, must inevitably result in a collision between the creed and the opinion and thought of the present Government. (Hear, hear.) This is no fanciful idea. In science we know perfectly well that every age brings its own discoveries, and either alters or profoundly modifies the work of the men who went before it. What was considered to be absolute truth by one age is condemned as perfectly childish by the next. (Hear, hear.) And it so happens that, whether rightly or wrongly I do not say—religion is no exception to this rule. The tendency of men's minds, in regard to morals and religion, is precisely the same as in regard to science or literature; and therefore I consider it to be injurious to the religious feeling and the moral feeling of the country that there should exist any impediment to the concurrence of the religious thought and feeling of the age with the general progress and change of ideas that advancing years may have brought about. (Hear, hear.) But the effect of a permanent endowment is that it gives a pecuniary and fixed interest to particular persons to maintain the inviolability of certain dogmas and opinions on religious subjects, without reference to whether they coincide with the general opinion and feeling of the times. (Hear, hear.) What is the result? Unless the difficulty can be overcome, or compromised in some way or other, what are known as reformations, revolutions occur from time to time, confiscation of property, and social disturbances. (Hear, hear.) Two years ago when the disendowment and disestablishment of the Irish Church were under discussion, we witnessed the outbreak of the feelings that measure excited—the feeling of horror at what was considered the sacrilegious appropriation of property intended for sacred purposes. That was a feeling which it was impossible not deeply to respect—(Hear, hear)—but in truth it was the result of the attempt to fix the religious instruction of the people in certain fixed and narrow channels which it is certain, sooner or later, to overflow. I take my stand on the broad principle that it is bad policy to allow of no limit to the right of directing the application of property in perpetuity, and I must say that, in connection with this point, I was rather astonished at the argument made use of by the hon. and learned member for Richmond (Sir R. Palmer). He treated it as a mere legal question of property, and said, "There is the property. If you do not enjoy the benefit of it, it is your own fault; you can if you like." I would ask—to use his own language—where would that line of argument lead us? Would it not justify the maintaining to the present day for the purpose of Druid worship, the religious offerings given by our remote ancestors to the Druid priests? (Hear, hear.) Would it not be proper and just if the argument of my hon. and learned friend was sound, to say, in that case also, "There is the property. We are employing it for the purposes designed by those who left it. If you do not enjoy the benefit, it is your own fault. You can, if you please, come to our groves and temples, and participate in our ceremonies." The real answer to the argument is that it is contrary to public policy that any person should have the right of directing the application of any property in a specific way for all generations to come. I do not mean that the will of the person who leaves the property is not to be held sacred within certain limits; but I wholly deny that it ought to be considered as absolutely and necessarily binding upon us, who live in the midst of social changes such as they never dreamt of. (Hear, hear.) For that reason,

(Continued on page 457.)

TO ADVERTISERS.

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TO CORRESPONDENTS.

*. Our special report of Tuesday night's debate has extended so very far beyond the estimated space that, notwithstanding our Supplement, we are obliged at the last moment to exclude one or two articles and letters, "Literature," and various items of intelligence.

NOTICE.

The next number of the NONCONFORMIST, which will be published as usual on WEDNESDAY (May 17th), will contain a resumé of the opinions of the press on the disestablishment question, an extended survey of the work of the principal School Boards up to the present time, and reports of the further meetings of the Congregational Union, the London, Colonial, and Evangelical Continental, Missionary Societies, and other Religious Anniversaries.

The number for May 4th (with eight-page Supplement), contains a full report of the Conference of the Liberation Society, Baptist and Wesleyan Anniversary meetings; and with the present number (with an eight-page Supplement), in which will be found a special report of the debate on Church Establishments, may still be had of the Publisher.

The NONCONFORMIST of WEDNESDAY, May 24 (with Supplement) will report in full the Annual Meeting of the Peace Society and other Anniversaries.

Each of these numbers contains, or will supply, original sketches of the May Meetings as they take place.

The above four numbers, (1s. 8d.), or single copies (5d.), will be sent by post on receipt of postage stamps.

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The Nonconformist.

THURSDAY, MAY 11, 1871.

SUMMARY.

THE conflict on Mr. Lowe's ill-starred Budget closed last Thursday evening, when Mr. McCullagh Torrens in a forcible speech moved in Committee of Ways and Means that the Income-tax should be fixed at fivepence instead of sixpence, quoting the Chancellor of the Exchequer's recent language that that tax "bitterly pinched the lower middle class, already very much over-burdened;" and advocating a partial suspension of the Terminable Annuities to make up the deficiency. A considerable section of the advanced Liberals took the view expressed by Mr. Fowler, who not knowing what Government he should prefer to the existing Ministry, should decline by his vote to disturb them; and by Sir H. Hoare, who, though disapproving the increase of the income-tax, supported the Government for the sake of the ballot and abolition of purchase. Mr. Goschen, on behalf of the Government, said that their great offence was that they endeavoured to meet deficiency by taxation, and Mr. Gladstone warned his supporters below the gangway that the result of such proceedings as the present would be, not the reduction of the expenditure, but the sliding unawares into the fatal system of meeting every temporary want by the ignoble resource of borrowing, in disregard of the principle which every sound, every salutary, aye, and every ancestral, maxim of prudence had made us adopt, and take a delight in adopt-

ing—the principle of regard for the future. To the Premier's lecture to the Conservatives, Mr. Disraeli responded that they would not be put down by the gibes of the right hon. gentleman, although he once stood in their ranks, and that it was his own duty to support the interests of the poorer classes of the community! Some twenty-five Liberals ventured to vote against the Government on this occasion, but the motion was rejected by a majority of forty-six in a House of 542 members. The Income Tax Bill is now pursuing its course unmolested.

One more effort has been made to get rid of the Government plan for the abolition of purchase in the army. When the Army Regulation Bill came up on Monday, Colonel Anson moved that the regulation prices to officers should be paid at once, and was strongly supported on the Conservative side. Captain Vivian, remarking that at first the question with officers as to the Army Bill was, "What should we lose?" but now it was, "What shall we make?" insisted that the pecuniary proposals of the bill were just and reasonable. The plan now proposed would enable officers to retain what they had paid for, to get their money back as well, would carry over-regulation prices prospectively as well as regulation value at once, and would cost some £5,000,000 more than the Government scheme. Mr. Cardwell also showed that the new scheme would stop promotion. Though the amendment was rejected by a majority of sixty-three, the Opposition would not allow the bill to proceed, and after five divisions on the question of adjournment, Mr. Gladstone gave way. Thus another night was lost—which was precisely what the Tories desired. But such obstructive policy will only increase the number of day sittings, without defeating the dreaded Ballot Bill.

We greatly regret to announce the death, at a comparatively early age, of the Rev. Thomas Lynch, of whose life, labours, and publications a brief estimate will be found in our Supplement.

The foreign news of the week mainly relates to the civil war before Paris. It was only a day or two ago that Fort Issy was actually captured by the Government troops. More than a hundred guns were taken, but the garrison escaped. A new and terrible battery erected at Montretout by Marshal MacMahon has reduced the forts of Montrouge and Vanvres to silence, and in a few days the National Guards, who show evident signs of exhaustion and discouragement, will be shut in behind the ramparts of the *enceinte*. As the end draws near, there are signs of the revival of the Imperialist cause both in the Army and National Assembly at Versailles—the respective claims of the Legitimists and Orleanists being apparently irreconcilable, and the moderate Republicans losing ground. All difficulties with respect to Germany have disappeared by the signing of the definitive Treaty of Peace yesterday at Frankfurt—"The Treaty of Washington," as the valuable result of the High Joint Commission is termed, is now under the consideration of the United States Senate in special session.

THE GOVERNMENT AND THEIR BILLS FOR THE SESSION.

THE course of public business; the waste of time caused by needlessly long discussions, as on the scheme for the abolition of purchase; and the serious delays owing to Mr. Lowe's financial blundering, naturally created a conviction that there must be a considerable "massacre of the innocents" this year. It was wisely decided that the inevitable sacrifice should be made without delay, and on Monday Mr. Gladstone announced the Ministerial proposals for restricting the labours of Parliament for the remainder of the session.

That the two elaborate measures for altering the plan of local rating, consolidating the rates, and erecting new local governing bodies, —questions of no little intricacy and touching many interests—should be thrown overboard, was anticipated. Mr. Goschen's bills must await consideration when—if ever—there is less pressure on the legislative time and attention. In respect to the Home Secretary's measure for restricting the liquor traffic, the licensing clauses—those which have excited the fierce hostility of the public-house interest—are to be abandoned. The other portion, which refers to the regulation of the trade—such as the hours of closing, the prevention of adulteration, the carrying out of the inspection of public-houses—is to be embodied in a new bill, which Mr. Gladstone hopes to pass during the present session. It is the opinion of many persons well versed in the subject that these police clauses will, if they should become law, materially lessen the terrible vice of drunkenness, remove many of the most crying abuses of public-houses, and by

making the liquor traffic a less profitable investment tend to restrict its area. At all events, temperance reformers will this session have to accept Mr. Bruce's instalment of reform or—nothing.

The Government will push forward, probably without any obstruction, the measure for protecting life and property in Westmeath and other disturbed districts in Ireland, and will take the Army Regulation Bill on every Government night till it has gone through all its stages. It has not yet got into committee, where numerous amendments threaten delay, but the determination of the Government will doubtless overcome the tactics of Lord Elcho and the other military officers who are increasingly hostile to the abolition of purchase. The University Tests Bill, after the recent debate in the House of Lords, may be regarded as virtually carried—and carried nearly in its original form. The Trades Unions Bill and the Ecclesiastical Titles Bill have passed the Commons, and are not likely to meet with much opposition in the Upper House.

There remain other measures of considerable importance, which the Premier hopes the Government will be able to pass, such as the Table of Lessons Bill and the proposals for regulating mines and reforming the merchant shipping code. "We shall proceed with the Ballot Bill," says Mr. Gladstone, and there can be no manner of doubt that there will be a severe struggle over this radical reform. The Opposition would fain crowd it out for this session, in the hope that the Lords may not have to come into conflict with the other branch of the Legislature on this question. Above all they dread another general election, conducted under the safeguards of secret voting and the other salutary regulations provided in the Parliamentary and Municipal Elections Bill. We trust that the Liberal party will in this important matter be as resolute as the Government are in earnest, and that in the interests of public morality, as well as freedom of election, the Ministerial measure may become law before there is another appeal to the country.

The shorn programme of the Government is not very imposing—for we may take it for granted that the Scotch Education Bill, which comes next in order to the Ballot Bill, will be thrown over. But if Ministers exhibit a firmness which has been sadly lacking thus far, and avoid further blundering, they may be able to show a fair though not considerable array of needful reforms effected before the session terminates. They are resolved to discuss without delay the proposals of the select committee for facilitating public business; and if this year should be somewhat barren of legislative results, plans may be adopted for preventing that block of measures in 1872 which has left the session of 1871 comparatively fruitless.

THE TRUCK SYSTEM.

If an intelligent foreigner were to judge of the industrial life of the British islands in the light of the revelations which are made in the report of the Truck Commission, we fear that his opinion of our social condition would be very unfavourable. He would think, and think justly, that the first and greatest duty which England owed was to herself and to her own people, and that until she redressed some of the weightier of the wrongs from which they suffer, she might excuse herself from embarking in continental enterprises, or from dabbling in the mysteries of foreign diplomacy. We would, however, fain hope that the Truck report will at once command a large share of public attention. The commissioners have done their work so thoroughly as to leave nothing to be desired, except that Mr. Bruce will not only bring in his promised bill on an early day, but will pass it through the Legislature with as much expedition as possible. In this way, and in this way only, shall we successfully vindicate the national reputation from the blot which now rests upon it.

The Truck system exists largely in the coal and iron trades of Scotland, Wales, Staffordshire, and the neighbourhood of Birmingham. It also prevails in the nail trade of Warwickshire, Worcester, and Staffordshire; in the hosiery manufacture of Nottinghamshire, Derbyshire, and Leicestershire; in the watch-making business at Prescott; and in the lead-mining districts on the borders of Lanarkshire and Dumfries. Traces of it are to be found in various other branches of industry, and in many places which, as we have mentioned the principal centres of the system, it is unnecessary to enumerate. In its originally legitimate form, truck was highly convenient to those classes of labourers who were located in remote districts, far from the busy haunts of retail competition. The shop provided for the labourer, at reasonable prices, all that he needed

in the shape of food, raiment, and other domestic necessities. This is the ancient theory of the truck system. In modern practice, however, it is an ingenious contrivance for swelling the master's profits at the expense of his ill-paid workman. There are many cases, no doubt, in which the goods are sold at fair rates; but the testimony of the report is that, on the whole, the purchasers are the victims of a gross system of injustice. The essence of the institution is that the labourer has no option but to deal at his employer's shop; and it is in evidence that when he is paid at one counter he is expected to lay out his money at another upon articles which he may not want, or which may be both dear and of an indifferent quality. It is also clearly established that in certain parts of Scotland the workman hardly ever receives any ready money at all. Once or twice a year a little money is doled out to him that he may pay his rent or meet other unavoidable liabilities; but as a rule he is forced to take his wages at the truck shop. The influence of such a system is disastrous to his independence and self-respect. He loses his individuality, becomes the slave of routine, has nothing to live for beyond the satisfying from day to day of his own petty wants, and sinks inevitably to the level of a serf.

The Commissioners state that "as in Wales so in Scotland, the store, or company's shop, depends principally on the length of the pays, and on the inability of the men to live in the interim without assistance," and therefore they recommend legislation with a view to the enforcement of short pays, which they allege is perfectly consistent with piece work. It is in Scotland that the climax of this inquiry has been reached. At some of the works in that country the men are not only expected to go to the store for all that they need, but when they do not apply for their advances fast enough, the "oversmen" are directed to urge them to go more frequently. "Sloping" is an offence which is certain to be recorded against the culprit, and is not seldom punished with dismissal, and yet the Commissioners affirm that "it would be difficult to resist the strong evidence in Scotland as to the habitually high prices and occasionally inferior quality of store goods." One man tells a piteous story, in the truth of which we are bound to believe, because it was confirmed by the advance clerk of whose conduct he complained. One of his children died, and his fellow-workmen raised a subscription to enable him to bury it. The sum subscribed was twenty-four shillings, but the clerk would only give him half of it in cash; and when, a fortnight later, another child died, this conduct was repeated. It will not surprise our readers to learn that the bitterest opponents of the shop are to be found among the women. It is impossible that they can study thrift or economy when they are compelled *volens volens* to pay company's prices for everything, and when drinking bars or "cages," in which beer and spirits *ad libitum* may be purchased by thirsty workmen, are established at the works. The attention of the United Kingdom Alliance should be directed to this abuse with a view to some salutary action against it. The moral effects of truck in Scotland are well described in the evidence of Mr. Ferrie, the general manager of the Monklands Iron and Steel Company's works:—

How do you think the organisation leads to evil?—In the first place, the workmen don't like it; they generally disapprove of works where stores are, and don't care about going to these works. We find that a drawback in carrying on the works. It is in that respect that I more particularly disapprove of them.

But there are other grounds also?—Yes; they have a tendency, I think, rather to demoralise the people.

You think they have a tendency to demoralise the men?—Yes.

In what way?—Most of the people that I see who deal in the stores get into a state of poverty, from the working of the system.

The witness then goes on to say that the men lose their independence; and that after sinking, as many of them do, to the bottom of the social scale, they never rise again.

The worst aspects of the system in South Wales are vividly portrayed by the Commissioners. The men not being able to get money are obliged to take provisions. They buy drink with candles, tobacco, or other goods. All their dealings with tradesmen are based on a system of barter from which they cannot fail to be the sufferers. Packets of tobacco pass from hand to hand like the current coin of the realm; and after going a certain round, at a loss of twenty-five per cent. to the original owner, find their way back again to the Company's Works, where they are again handed to the workmen in lieu of wages. In Wales the piteous spectacle of women and children waiting all night outside the shops that they might be served first, "their children being hungry and wanting victuals," adds to the abomination of the institution. Mr. Wright, the able Secretary of the Commission,

gives a pathetic account of "Turnbook" night at Abersychan. An old woman and a little boy came as early as 1.50 a.m.; and in a few minutes they were joined by two women.

Six more women and two little girls came between two and three a.m.; two more women between three and four a.m.; fifteen more before five a.m., and when the shop opened at half-past five, between fifty and sixty had come and were standing round the doors or sitting, huddled together for warmth, on the doorsteps, or on the stones before the shop, or on their baskets in the road.

They said the shop would not have opened so early but that an alarm had been given that it was being watched; also that the numbers in waiting that morning were less than usual.

The place was dark, except for the occasional reflection from the furnaces behind the hills. All the women whom I asked had been there at other times in rain and snow, and there was no shelter of any kind.

One had been there on the night before a recent turn-book day from 11.30 p.m. on the Sunday night, till the shop opened on the Monday morning. Once when she had come at midnight there were already six before her.

If they did not come till seven they might have to wait till two or three p.m. By coming before four a.m. they would be served by seven, but "they would be fit for little work that day."

This picture is a painful one, but a yet more harrowing description is given of the state of affairs in connection with the nail trade, where the unfortunate workman, who is worse off than the poorest agricultural labourer, is held fast in the iron grip of a class of grasping middlemen. Middlemen again play an odious part in the hosiery trade. This trade, in its turn, is burdened with a special grievance of its own, in the form of excessive frame-rents, the complaint being that more frames are forced upon the men than they can utilise. At Prescot the workmen are often paid their wages in watches, which they are compelled to pawn or sell for a pound or thirty shillings less than the amount with which they are debited. Here, too, the truck system generally, in all its most oppressive aspects, is upheld by many of the masters. We might continue these details of oppression and injustice; but we have, we hope, said enough to convince the reader that the Truck Commissioners have hit on a real plague-spot in our industrial system, and that Mr. Bruce is justified in insisting upon the prompt application of a legislative remedy.

THE DISESTABLISHMENT OF THE BRITISH CHURCHES.

(Continued from page 455.)

I have come to the conclusion that it is for the interest of the community that the Church should be severed from its present connection with the State, and that the Church of England, like every other religious body in the country, should be placed on a footing of perfect equality with other denominations. (Hear, hear.) I was greatly relieved by one argument of my hon. and learned friend the member for Richmond, when he said that if you disendow the Church, and disputes hereafter arise, they would still be subject to the law. I was glad to hear him say that; because I was sure that the great authority of his name will be believed in by large numbers of persons, who, I think, have a lurking idea that when it does take place they will be much freer than I think they ought to be. For myself I do not hesitate to go so far as to say that if the result of the disestablishment of the Church and the perfect freedom of all religious creeds should be that any denomination should rise into prominence over all the others, and were to become endowed with large property, and come to exercise an intolerant supremacy, I for one would be the first to sustain that tie of the Church to the State which I now wish to see dissolved. (Hear, hear.)

Dr. BALL animadverted indignantly on the half-hearted opposition which the Home Secretary had offered to the motion.

The Establishment in England was either right or wrong. If right it should be maintained with the whole power of the Government, if wrong it should be assailed with the whole power of the Government. (Hear, hear.) But how had it been met? The Government put forward the Home Secretary, who met it by an apparent negative but by a real encouragement. "I am not an advocate for an Establishment in the abstract," said the right hon. gentleman.

Mr. BRUCE: I never used that expression.

Dr. BALL asked the right hon. gentleman what was the expression he did use? ("Oh!") Surely he had distinctly stated that he did not adhere to the principle of Establishments, and that, as an abstract question, he was not himself an advocate of Establishments. If the Home Secretary did not say this in express terms, his speech implied it. What next did the right hon. gentleman say? "The colonies we have sent forth have abandoned Establishments." Call you this backing your friends? The right hon. gentleman was put up to resist the motion, and that was how he resisted it. "The time is not come—not now." It would be a bold Government which would undertake at this moment to overturn the Established Church.

But "bold" was not an epithet which could be applied to the present Government, for there was no measure which they could not withdraw in order to escape opposition. The Church would be defended as long as it did not imperil the interests of the Government, and no longer. (Hear, hear.) The truth was, it was utterly impossible for gentlemen on the Treasury Bench really to advocate the cause of the Established Church in England, because they had conceded in respect of Ireland the very principle on which the English Church rested. (Hear, hear.)

Mr. LEATHAM: I think it may be said that all the views expressed by most hon. gentlemen opposite who have spoken on this question have been familiar to the public for the last forty years, and the reply has been the whole course of legislation during that period. I do not, however, sneer at hon. gentlemen opposite for this use of their ancestral weapons, because from their point of view they have been logical throughout. They knew from the beginning whither the controversy tended, and if we now find ourselves in the condition that we are logically bound to do one of two things—either to go on towards the consummation to which the whole of our legislation points or to repeal the whole of that legislation, it is not because we have not received timely and eloquent warning from the benches opposite. So long as it was possible to regard the English Church as the Church of the nation, so long as you were ready to admit that those who did not belong to the Church did not belong to the nation, and they were excluded on that ground from every office of emolument and trust, so long as you proscribed other forms of worship, and treated those who indulged in them as criminals and outlaws whom the State was bound to punish or suppress, so long was your course perfectly logical and clear; and if this course had been persisted in at the present moment, the Church of England would never have become what she has become now, a paradox in legislation, and an excrescence on our political system. Not even in theory are the Church and the nation any longer co-extensive. Even the Universities—the last stronghold of the old theory—are being thrown open to men of every creed in defiance of it; half the nation stands outside your Church denying her authority, declining her discipline, and abstaining altogether from her communion. But that part of the nation is no less part of the nation on this ground. It possesses all the rights and privileges of Englishmen. The Church is retiring everywhere before the nation—"No, no"—and, therefore, she is not only an anomaly, but an anachronism. Hon. gentlemen opposite may call this a specious line of argument for me to use; they may think I ought to be deterred from using it by the memory of what has been done for Dissenters. I say that not even all that you have done can wipe out the memory of the atrocities you have perpetrated, contrasted with which your subsequent policy appears to have been generous. Nothing you have done since has been in excess of what you were bound to do long ago, by considerations of the commonest and barest justice. The man who has been wrongfully imprisoned and pilloried does not thank you at the termination of his punishment for a free pardon, and the whole of the gratitude the Dissenters were bound to feel is towards those statesmen, just, wise, and enlightened beyond their time, who have restored us by slow and safe degrees to the rights which we ought never to have been robbed of, and who have thus laid down a long series of precedents, every one of them stronger than that which went before, for the final recognition by law of the complete and absolute and perpetual equality which ought to exist in religious matters among the people of this country. (Cheers.) Nor has the Church herself been slow to recognise to what the present state of feeling is tending. In every part of the Church, in every section of that great bundle of sects which calls itself the Church, are to be found men clear-sighted enough, and courageous enough, and honest enough to tell the Church to prepare for the change which they know to be inevitable. I will not weary the House by quotations, but if the House will permit me, I will just read a few words from three gentlemen only among all the Church writers on this subject, who fairly represent each of the great groups of opinion into which the Church is notoriously divided. First, I will quote a few words from the Rev. Mr. Ryle, who I think will be permitted to speak as the representative of the Evangelical party in the Church. In a letter in the *Record* he says, "There is a current setting in towards the disestablishment of all national churches, and we are already in it. We shall soon be in the rapids, and in a very few years we shall be over the falls." I pass on to the Broad Church. Dean Alford, who, when alive, was one of the most distinguished exponents of the views of that section of the Church, stated in an admirable essay on the Church of the Future, that however this end might be opposed, accomplished it would certainly be; that history has for ages been preparing its way in

past changes; and that God's arm is thrusting it on, and man's power cannot keep it back. Then I take as the exponent of the third great section of the Church, Mr. Wood, the President of the Church Union. He says, speaking of disestablishment, "It is impossible to look round the world and not see that everywhere the tendency of the age is to separate things temporal from things spiritual." Why, when the whole course of legislation, the whole current of opinion, the whole tendency of the age, and as Dean Alford said, God's arm, is thrusting on this change, what is the class of arguments by which those opposing this change hope to keep these gigantic and converging forces at bay? Let me say that I approach the consideration of the question entirely free from that hatred of the Church or even that prejudice against the Church which it has been too much the fashion of our opponents to attribute to those whom they have been pleased to nickname "political Dissenters." Though my Nonconformity comes down to me from Puritan times I hope that does not prevent me from joining heartily and earnestly and reverently in her services, or from aiding where occasion requires in the extension of those efforts that are taking place around me; for the Church herself, as a great religious community influenced by the noblest motives that can exalt mankind, is engaged everywhere in holy and arduous work. For the body of men who are realising the Christian idea I have no feeling but that of profound respect and cordial regard, and it is because of these feelings of regard and respect for the Church and its ministers that I shrink with a feeling of indignation from some of the arguments I have heard in her support to-night. (Hear, hear.) The hon. and learned gentleman the member for Richmond told us that if we disestablished the Church, religion in outlying districts would languish if not expire. He drew a beautiful picture of the beneficent exertions of the clergyman, in all of which I went heartily along with him, and he confessed that if we disestablished the Church all this would cease in rural districts, and he talked of tearing society up by the roots as one result of disestablishment. How is it possible to imagine a more triumphant refutation of the argument of those who maintain that the union of the Church with the State has gone far to cripple the energies, to eat out the vitality, and to paralyse the exertions of the Church. I am astonished that gentlemen do not abstain from these abject confessions of weakness to which they say the Church is reduced. If, then, the position of this great religious community, if with all her existing and remaining advantages, if with the advantage which the hon. and learned gentlemen actually put before us of her vast parochial organisations throughout the country, with her churches, schools, and parsonages built everywhere, with her vast funds of private origin or of recent growth which nobody proposes to touch—"Oh, oh," and "Hear, hear!"—it is unable to maintain in all their efficiency its services, ministrations, and offices throughout the country without silencing a single pulpit, then is she rotten at the core, and it is time that she should surrender to Churches which are still vigorous—because perhaps they are still free—that work of evangelisation for which, under her own admission or by the admissions of those who speak for her, she is no longer equal except under the stimulus of perpetual "pick-me-ups"—(laughter)—in the shape of State support. The hon. and learned gentleman spoke of the argument of justice, and he said that the Dissenters' demand for disestablishment was the mere result of the rivalry of sects. He appeared to be unable to discern any grievance under which Dissenters labour whatever—nothing but a sentimental one. But when the hon. and learned gentleman was dealing with a cognate question a year or two ago, he had no difficulty whatever in discovering what was meant by a sentimental grievance. I will take the liberty of calling the attention of the House to a few words taken from a very memorable speech of the hon. and learned gentleman on the Irish Church. He said, "What some people call sentimental grievances are calculated by their nature to excite most substantial irritation—the same feelings which prompt men to make great sacrifices for political purposes for the national honour, are excited to resist any form of political ascendancy which is maintained by the external power of any class, and which if that power were removed would have no moral right to continue." And he goes on afterwards to explain what he means by a sentimental grievance. He says, "It consists in giving by State Establishment to the Church of the minority of the Irish people a superiority of rank, an exclusive right, a right which no other religious body of the country possesses, to have its laws deemed part of the law of the land, to have courts maintained for the execution of those laws, to have the Sovereign associated with the appointments of its chief officers, like the great officers of State, and to have the introduction of its chief officers into the highest seats of honour in one of the two Houses of Parliament." (Hear, hear.) Does the hon. and learned gentleman mean to infer that this is not a grievance because it is a grievance of only half the population of this country? The right hon. and learned gentleman who spoke last, spoke of the act of disestablishment as though it were an act of national apostasy. He spoke of this act as if we were about to sever the State from the sanction and authority of religion. But I have never heard that the religion upon which a Christian State is founded is a mere thing of Acts of Parliament, a mere thing of formularies, still less a mere

thing of "purple and fine linen." (Cheers.) The religion of a nation is in its conscience and in its heart, and the outward manifestations of it are to be found not in the performance of "pompous rites in domes august," but in its policy in its regard for the poor and suffering, in the enlightenment and absolute equality of its laws, in its Christian forbearance towards other nations, and in its horror of bloodshed. (Hear, hear.) The right hon. gentleman referred to the speech of the hon. and learned gentleman the member for Richmond, as the expression of a very powerful argument against those who were promoting this resolution. We are aware of the view of the hon. and learned gentleman upon this very point. The hon. and learned member for Richmond has said, speaking of the argument of national apostasy, it appeared to him that such a view was founded upon an entirely false notion of the power and functions of civil government, and of the nature of national religion. The right hon. gentleman who spoke last allowed his imagination to run riot upon the dismal consequences which are to ensue from disestablishment. What dismal consequences have arisen in those of our colonies that have followed this policy? And what are likely to follow in Ireland, when, for the first time in its melancholy history, the Protestant Episcopal Church seems about to inherit a blessing. (Loud cries of "Oh, oh," followed by cheers.) Will the right hon. gentleman maintain that these dismal consequences have ensued in America? They have no Established Church in America, and yet they have not had any of these dismal consequences. Perhaps the right hon. gentleman will say the Americans are an irreligious people. Well, then I venture to quote in opposition to that the opinion of one of the most shrewd clergymen of the Church of England who ever lived. He said, "The Americans are devout without being unjust—the great problem in religion—a higher proof of civilisation than painted tescups, waterproof leather, and broadcloth at two guineas a yard." (Laughter, and cries of "Name.") The style of the remarks would, I should have thought, have conveyed the name. I am quoting from the works of Sydney Smith. It strikes me that the problem of which he speaks is the very problem we have to solve in this country—namely, the problem how to be devout without being unjust. (Cheers and counter cheers.) But when we ask for this we are confronted, as we were in the case of the Irish Church, and as we were a few months ago, by the spectre of ancient time. We are told you cannot disestablish without you disendow, and you have no right to disendow because the Church of the present day is simply the Church of England before the Reformation, only purified from Popish errors. But if it had not been for those Popish errors, where would have been the great bulk of its endowments? It was the Church of Rome working upon the fears of guilty men which caused them to strip their innocent offspring of their inheritance in order to enrich the Church. (Hear, hear.) To such an extent did this ecclesiastical robbery go, and such was the danger lest the whole land of England should fall under their sacerdotal power, that it was found necessary even so early as the reign of Edward III. to pass the first of those Statutes of Mortmain which arrested the further alienation of the land to the Church. But in a matter of religion, the right hon. gentleman says: I am justified in making some little gain out of the fears of sinful men. I do not believe in post-mortem religion—I do not believe heaven is to be purchased by legacies—I have no faith in post-mortem religion, but I am not above profiting by it. I denounce the superstition, but the proceeds of that superstition I keep. (Laughter and cheers.) After a very able and convincing speech, in which my hon. friend introduced his motion, a speech, which seemed to contain the condensed thought of a lifetime—(Hear, hear) it would be a work of supererogation in the attempt to travel over ground which he has occupied with so much eloquence and skill; but I wish rather to express, not only the opinion, but the unalterable determination of the great body of Dissenters throughout the whole country to support the motion of my hon. friend. If it be objected that there is sitting on the Treasury Bench an hon. friend of mine who does not hold precisely these views, I hope my hon. friend will not think I am saying anything disrespectful of him when I say that I should feel more impressed with the declaration of the opinion he has made if it proceeded from a different part of the House. ("Oh, oh," and "Hear, hear.") I do not for a moment intend to convey that my hon. friend has made that declaration of opinion simply because he sits upon that bench. I know my hon. friend too well for that.

Mr. WINTERBOTHAM: I made it before I sat upon this bench. (Oh.)

Mr. LEATHAM: We have observed that even before hon. gentlemen take their seats on the bench there does sometimes creep over them a certain languor of sentiment which is indicative of the great change they are about to undergo. ("Oh, oh," and "Hear, hear.")

Mr. WINTERBOTHAM: I beg to say that I made the statement to which the hon. gentleman refers before I entered Parliament at all, and I was taken to task by the public journals for it.

Mr. LEATHAM: My hon. friend deprecates the agitation which is excited by the motion of the member for Bradford on the ground that it must produce discord. I grant that. I believe there is no question which can be brought before this House that must so stir the depths of society as this;

and I will tell you why. It is because there is no question in which the interests of society are more profoundly involved. My hon. friend wanders about the edge of the fight crying, "Peace, peace, when there is no peace." (Hear, hear.) The forces which are to contend on this battle-field have been mustering and marshalling for two centuries, and the whole air is full of the portents of strife.

Gemit ultima pulsus
Thracia pedum: circumque atra formidinis ora,
Ireque insidique, Dei comitatus, aguntur.

The clash of conflict must soon drown the voice of those who go about amiably but feebly—(a laugh)—deprecating an encounter the time of which has come and the issue of which is sure. (Cheers.) It is most important that we should give undisguised expression to our opinions, because it seems to me that no slight misconception on this point exists in the minds of some of those statesmen whose high function it is to erect into a practical policy the schemes and convictions of those by whose aid they stand. (Hear, hear.) The right hon. gentleman who spoke from the Treasury bench told us there was no public feeling whatever in favour of this motion, and we sometimes hear, that this demand for disestablishment is the croquet of a few enthusiasts—of a few persons up and down the country, having little weight in the country and little voice in this House. To use the words of one of our critics—"persons who are blindly unconscious of the world outside their own narrow circle." Well, the sooner hon. gentlemen disabarrass themselves of that assumption the better. He must have been a most unobservant man who can mix in Liberal society of any grade and not have made the discovery, that before we are many years, and perhaps before we are many months, older, this question of the freedom of the Church, and of the removal of all marks of inferiority from Dissenters, will be made the test question of Liberal opinion throughout the country. (Cheers.) Under these circumstances, it was with great regret that I heard the speech of the right hon. gentleman. I regret to find the Government taking up a position with reference to this question, and with reference to all other questions which have their root in this, which I believe they will have to evacuate before long, and possibly not without considerable loss of artillery. (Hear, hear.) As a supporter of the Government, I hope never to have the question asked in anger, "How long are we, a party of Dissenters, to follow a Cabinet of Churchmen?" (Cheers, and counter cheers.) I speak advisedly, for although I should be the last man in the House to undervalue the aid which we receive from enlightened Churchmen, and who, in larger or smaller numbers throughout the kingdom, swell the Liberal majority; although I should be the last man to undervalue the immense material support which, when we are dealing with questions of this character, we derive from the co-operation of members of the Church, but who resent even more than we can resent the pressure of the golden fetters with which they are bound; but for all that I say, without the least fear of contradiction, it is from the great Nonconformist body throughout the country that the momentum came which has carried the Liberal party over so many obstacles, and which I believe in a future not distant is destined to carry it over obstacles higher, broader, and more obstinate than any it has encountered in the past. (Hear, hear.) I trust, then, when the question grows larger and larger, as it will do until it fills the whole visible horizon, we shall find there is no interval of opinion between those who undertake to lead the party and those who impart its restive power, for I am sure if it should be found that such an interval does exist, an equal interval will divide Her Majesty's Ministers from the zealous support of those by virtue of whose power throughout the kingdom, more perhaps than that of any other force, it is that they are at this moment sitting on the Treasury bench. (Cheers.) Not that I ignore the extreme irritation which the suggestion of this discrepancy appears to have produced on some. There are some Dissenters who have rubbed the leaders with the oil of praise till they have shone again, and it is only when they use the oil of discontent; but at last they make the discovery they should have made at the beginning, that they were only oiled Whigs after all. (Laughter.) I can readily believe that there is something which is very distressing in the mere notion of disestablishment. Hon. gentlemen have spoken of the number of governments that must cease to exist before the question is settled, but though there is something so distressing to the Whig mind in that idea, it is astonishing to what the Whig mind will reconcile itself on mature reflection. (Opposition cheers.) As to the great party opposite, the riches of whose fortunes are presided over at the present moment by a statesman who has exceeded all his predecessors in the receptive attitude of his genius, and in the success with which he has adopted with irresistible impulse the creation of other minds. (Laughter and cheers.) This is an age in which we have learnt to call no question common or unclean. I have sat in this House long enough to hear household suffrage pooh-poohed, proved frightfully dangerous, and then embraced on the Opposition bench with tears of joy. I have heard the ballot denounced as unconstitutional, immoral, and un-English from the Ministerial bench. I have seen the ballot become a Cabinet question. (Laughter and cheers.) I have learnt to place great reliance upon reason and common sense—upon the prerogative of prudence, and upon the noble instinct of self-preservation. (Laughter and cheers.) I

have seen statesmen swim gallantly with the stream, and therefore it is that I do not despair of seeing the day when statesmen, who now shrink in holy horror from the bare idea of bishops without seats in the House of Lords, will conspire with the dignitaries of the Church assembled in full canonicals to bear the great sacrifices to the horns of the altar. (Laughter and cheers.) Do not think that anything short of this, any mere removal of pains and penalties, and of the disabilities under which we labour at the Universities, will satisfy Dissenters now. (Cheers.) The time has gone by for the cry of toleration. Why was it that we regarded the rejection of the University Tests Bill last year, or what took place in the House of Lords last night, with absolute indifference? It is because we ask for justice, because we resent as an impertinence the phrase toleration itself; because we are sick of these doles of compassion flung to us with superciliousness and hesitation, as meat thrown to the dogs under the table; and because we are determined to make disestablishment the first great political problem of the time. (Loud and continued cheering.)

MR. DISRAELI: There is one remarkable feature of the motion of the hon. member for Bradford: it recommends a policy for which there is no precedent in the history of this country. This is a circumstance which of itself alone should teach us to be cautious and to consider well before we accept the proposition which he offers. At no time in the history of this country has there been a period when the State has not recognised and supported some religious profession of the community. Even in that important period in the history of our country when possessed by the Puritans—whom, I suppose, modified by the circumstances of the age, I may conclude the hon. member for Bradford fairly represents—though they abolished bishoprics, though they destroyed liturgies, still they upheld the connection between the Church and State, and the appeal to the civil arm to support spiritual predominance was never more earnestly made and never more energetically exercised. (Cheers.) The connection of Church and State was never more powerful than after the decapitation of Charles I., and even after the Revolution of 1688, though mitigated by the circumstances of advancing times, the principles of that connection were unreservedly asserted and acted on. I say these are circumstances which ought to make us view with, I will not say suspicion, but at least with that caution which should always influence prudent men the proposition of the hon. gentleman, because, so far as England is concerned, it is mere theory he is placing before us. And the hon. gentleman was quite conscious of this; he is too well informed not to be aware of that to which I have just referred. In order to substantiate his theory, the hon. gentleman could appeal to no previous practice of England. He referred to the beneficial results which had followed from the separation of Church and State in European countries, and he referred also to the precedent of our legislation two years ago with respect to that which he described as the kingdom of Ireland—not an accurate term. (Laughter.) This reference to continental experience was necessarily vague, and was hardly fair, when we are called upon to give our opinion upon matters of such importance with which we are so intimately acquainted and so intimately connected. But I will take one instance, I think the fairest, of the consequences of this dissolution of the connection of Church and State on the continent of Europe. I will take it in a great country where the revolution was effected some time ago, so that there has been a fair period for the experiment; and I will ask the hon. gentleman what he thinks of the condition of France with respect to this matter. France, an old Roman Catholic country, had much analogy with England in this respect; its Church was a national Church. I will not refer to the great events of the end of last century and the commencement of the present; but we all know that two of the wisest and ablest of the monarchs of France since the dissolution occurred, the First Emperor and King Louis XVIII., devoted all their energies during their reigns in order, in some degree, to recreate and bring together again the elements of that connection; and, mark you, not merely to give stability to the State—though of course such considerable statesmen were not unmindful of this consideration—but, as was avowed by the great Emperor himself, in order to secure the religious liberty of the laity. Well, you see what the religious liberty of the laity is in France at the present moment. You see, also, what is the condition of the Church in France at the present moment. The great experiment has now been carried out almost to the letter, and you have the Archbishop of Paris, a man of undoubted piety and virtue, and a most enlightened man, in the dungeons of the Red Republic. So far for the continental illustration of the hon. gentleman. (Hear, hear.) He brings forward a proposition which so far as English history is concerned, is a mere theory; he attempts to support it by continental experience. I have taken a most fair and favourable instance as an illustration. And now look at what he calls the kingdom of Ireland, so far as the precedent of two years ago is concerned. I agree with the hon. gentleman that the precedent

was a perfect one if you look at it logically. Logically speaking, if you disestablish the Church in Ireland, I think you are bound to disestablish the Church in Scotland and in England. But, fortunately, this country is not governed by logic. (Laughter and cheers.) It has a Parliamentary Government; it is governed by rhetoric and not by logic (laughter), or otherwise it would have been erased long ago from the list of leading communities. It is rather premature to draw any consequence from what has occurred so recently in Ireland—(Hear, hear)—and I confess, not wishing to introduce unnecessary elements of controversy in this debate, I would rather that the references to the Irish Church had not been made. So far as I can form an opinion upon what has occurred in Ireland, and what appear to be the consequences of the disestablishment of the Protestant Church, those consequences are not encouraging. (Hear.) On the one side I see a rampant spirit of Ultramontanism, and on the other the development of a contracted and exclusive Protestantism—(Hear, hear)—which I confess fills me sometimes with dismay. (Hear, hear.) So that while the Archbishop of Paris is immured, in consequence of the adoption of this new policy, in the dungeons of the Red Republic, the learned, intelligent, and amiable Archbishop of Dublin is suffering under the excommunication of the Protestant party. (Hear, hear.) When we have a proposition of this character brought forward, founded, as I remind the House, entirely on theory, one is inclined to ask who it is that prompts this appeal to the House of Commons. We are told it is the people. In these days everybody is the people—(laughter)—except myself. (Renewed laughter.) I never claimed to be the people; I am quite satisfied with the position I hold as the member for Buckinghamshire. We are told that such is the external impulse and general demand, that what would be a great revolution becomes highly politic, not to say necessary. Who is it that requires the great change? It has been avowed by the last speaker in his lively discourse that those whom he describes as the Dissenters of England demand the change. I apprehend that I am not in error when I assume that the Dissenters of England may fairly be looked upon as the natural successors of the old Puritan party. No doubt they have been always a national party in the State, and their views are to be considered. We must remember, however, that this is a very old quarrel; it is a quarrel which, as the hon. gentleman who has just addressed us has fairly admitted, is 200 years old; but the great complaints which were the origin of that quarrel, and which for a considerable time sustained it, have no longer any existence. (Hear, hear.) They have no longer to complain of the dynasty; they have no longer to encounter Archbishop Laud, or even Bishop Sherlock. If you come to the great estate of the Church, why, for nearly the last forty years it has been under the management and direction of a commission of laymen, and they have slowly—certainly more slowly than the country, perhaps, expected—dealt with that estate, and they have ultimately conferred immense benefit; they have succeeded in making a general distribution of the estate of the Church, and, in their determination that that distribution should be generous and equal, I regret that in some instances they have reduced the means by which the Church of England always was enabled to maintain its position, not only as an orthodox, but also as a learned, Church. The Dissenters are also in possession of great political power, which no one envies them. What, then, have the Dissenters to complain of? The causes of complaint which 200 years ago impelled to such violent action, which for some time after were traditionary, which of late years practically have ceased to exist, I can hardly believe that causes of that character would render an assault upon the Church by the descendants of the Puritans, without any additional cause of complaint, one that would be fruitful of any great results. But it must be admitted that the Dissenters of the present day have allies, and powerful allies. Ever since the great revolution at the end of the last century a considerable and violent party has maintained itself which is opposed to any legal recognition or support by the State of the religious sentiment of the community. The adherents of this party are opposed to union between Church and State on grounds totally different to those which influence the Dissenters. And besides this party, which is powerful, no doubt, in many parts of Europe, and which has some influence even in this country, there is and always has been a certain amount of discontent among members of the Church of England, who are influenced by what I will venture to call ultra-sacerdotal objects, and who, for quite a contrary purpose, will, or threaten that they will, combine with others, with whom they do not sympathise, in a common object of destruction. (Hear.) I think, however, the experience we have would rather induce me to believe that no great apprehension is to be feared from these Churchmen. Whatever may be the freak of the moment, when the time comes for action they will pause and reflect before committing themselves to a contest in which they will find for allies those with whom they have no cordial sympathy. Therefore, we have to encounter the descendants of the Puritans supported by that party which no longer admits that there ought to be a recognition by the State of some religious opinion in the community. I will not argue upon that subject. I will assume that a great majority of the House, and a great majority of the country, are of opinion that the State ought to re-

cognise and support some religious expression in the community. (Hear, hear.) That is my answer to what I will call the revolutionary party. The party asking for this revolution may be described as the descendants of the old Puritanic party, supported by that set of philosophical revolutionists, or revolutionary philosophers, who of late years have begun to produce some influence on political thought and action. Now, it does not appear to me that these are forces which the nation, as a great community, should fear. At least, they do not offer such a representation of popular power and opinion as ought to induce the nation suddenly, and with the precipitation expected by the hon. gentleman opposite, to give up one of the ancient institutions under which this country has so long existed and flourished. (Hear, hear.) They can only do so upon the monstrous assumption, which has prevailed too much in this debate, that the people of England generally are not in favour of their Established Church. I want to know what satisfactory evidence has been brought forward on this subject by any gentleman who has taken part in this debate. It was the point of all others on which we might have expected minute details from the hon. gentleman who introduced this question with an intellectual power and a maturity of thought worthy of the occasion. I listened to the speech with interest, and felt it was an address which maintained the character of the House of Commons. (Hear, hear.) But I noticed the total absence from that speech of evidence upon the vital point, showing that the Church of England was no longer the Church of the people. Take the population of our country districts. It exceeds the population of our towns, and I think no hon. member will for a moment assert that in the country districts of England the influence of the Church, and I am not speaking merely of the clergy, is not very considerable. No one will for a moment pretend that the reverse is the case. The hon. member for Bradford, indeed, spoke very lightly on this part of the subject. He spoke of the condition of our rural districts, but he seemed to refer for the information on which his opinion was based to Blue-books. I must say I thought this was a very remarkable source of information for a gentleman to go to who is asking the House to make so large a change in the constitution of the country. I am not one of those who underrate the importance of Blue-books, but I think you should form your opinion of the character of a large portion of the English nation from personal experience and observation. (Hear, hear.) You must remember that the casual information which you may obtain from Blue-books as to the population of England has reference generally to some particular industry or some exceptional circumstances in a limited portion of the community; and that it is extremely hazardous to form an idea from Blue-books of the character and condition of some millions of the English people. I have formed an idea totally different from that entertained by the hon. member for Bradford of the feelings of the people of England in reference to this subject. I will not dwell upon this, however, because I listened, as every member of the House must have listened, with pleasure and admiration to the description given by the hon. member for Richmond of the character of the rural population of this country. (Hear, hear.) My heart and my experience alike respond to the expressions he used, for there was not a single trait marked out by him which was not the result of my own personal observation. I cannot admit that a gentleman who, like the hon. member for Bradford, brings forward a motion which greatly, if not entirely, depends on the feeling of the population ought to treat in so light and casual a manner the temper of the great body of the country population, of England, and to refer as his authority to some Parliamentary papers. I think hon. gentlemen on both sides of the House will agree that in the country districts the influence of the Church of England is predominant. (Hear.) It is as beneficial, I believe, as it is great; but on the present occasion I will speak only of the power and influence of the Church. Everybody must, I think, admit that in the country districts the Church is as influential as any class or corporation can be in a free country. (Hear, hear.) When gentlemen like the hon. member for Bradford think they are adducing an argument of force against the existence of an institution like the Church of England by alleging that its character is not universal, and that its policy has not produced unity, we must remember that in a country where toleration has existed for nearly two centuries, and where for 40 or 50 years religious liberty has practically existed, it is not in the nature of things, it is not possible, it is not desirable, that there should be this universality and this unity. (Hear, hear.) And yet, because these things are impossible or impracticable, are you prepared to give up the great benefits which may accrue from an establishment of such a character? Are you prepared to say that because the Church is not universal, and because it does not produce unity, you will sacrifice the manifold and ineffable blessings it bestows? (Hear, hear.) I admit that the influence of the Church of England in the towns is not equal to its influence in the country districts—in, in fact, very different. But we must remember that the population of the towns who are not in communion with the Church are not necessarily Dissenters. The vast majority in fact are not Dissenters. The late Archbishop of Canterbury, a most pious and amiable man, but not a man of great resource and not sanguine about the future of the Church—Archbishop Sumner—did me the honour to confer with

me upon some measures which were then in progress, with a view to improve the relations between the Church and the people. They were of a beneficial character, and no doubt well devised, but the Archbishop was not sanguine as to their results, or at least was not sanguine that they would affect the entire good which he desired. "for," he remarked, "whatever we do, after all, the nation has outgrown the Church." Now fifty years ago the nation had outgrown something else; it had outgrown the State. The relations between the State and the nation were then most imperfect and unsatisfactory. Was that an argument for the abolition of the State? ("Hear, hear, and laughter.") You might have come to this House, and given such a picture of the imperfect relations between the nation and the State that the logical conclusion would have been a resolution like that of the hon. member. But English statesmen of both parties were too wise to take such a course. They gave their minds up to the immense necessities of the hour; and whether you look to our Parliamentary, our municipal, or our social relations between the nation and the State, which since that time have been fostered and established, you see what could be done by wise and patriotic men to improve those relations, and you find institutions which, though there may sometimes be grumbling and sometimes wild talk, such as there always will be among Englishmen—(laughter)—command the affection and reverence of the great body of the people. (Hear, hear.) Why should you not do the same with the Church? The task is, of course, a much more difficult one than the reconstruction of the State by Ministers who are supported by a triumphant majority in Parliament and a sympathetic people, and who must thus exercise a power which the clergy and even the laity of the Church do not possess. But clergy and laity have for years been following this course, and the results though slowly retained, have been considerable. (Hear, hear.) The population of the great towns not in communion with the Church are not, I repeat, alienated from the Church, and are not in communion with the Dissenters. Are you prepared to say that millions of Englishmen will long remain in communion with no religious body? For my own part, I have always believed that, organically, the English were a religious people. (Hear.) You have partially educated them; you are now going to educate them completely. Do you believe that educated Englishmen will long remain without a religious profession, or lead that life of religious indifference which we are told prevails in many of these great towns? I do not believe it. (Hear, hear.) But when they are educated they will not fly to the con out ale. They will appreciate a learned clergy, a refined ritual, and the consolation of the beautiful offices of the Church. (Hear, hear.) Therefore, I think the future of the Church in these great towns ought not to be overlooked; and when we are asked to produce a great revolution in this country, because, forsooth, the people are no longer in communion with the Church, difficult as I know it must be in the absence of accurate statistics to come to a definite conclusion, I must impress upon the House how desultory, how imperfect, and vague are the statements upon which you are asked to assent to this great change. (Hear.) What evidence have we that the separation of the Church from the State is desired by the great body of the people of this country? I do not believe that any one can pretend to possess even approximate proof on the subject. Yet, if we take a larger view of the situation of the Church, and the undoubted millions who are in communion with it; if we remember that there exists a body of active and devoted clergy, numbering at least 20,000; if we observe all the features of vigorous life that daily and hourly surrounds us—I ask on which side lies the preponderance of evidence? Are the majority of the people in favour of the dissolution of this alliance, or does the evidence show the reverse to be true? I think there can be no doubt about it. We hear of *plebiscites*. I do not wish to propose one on any question. But if a *plebiscite* were taken and the people of England were asked, aye or no, "Will you abolish the alliance between State and Church?" I have very little doubt what would be the answer. (Cheers.) There is no evidence whatever, then, to warrant the appeal of the hon. gentleman, and if the Church conducts itself with wisdom and discretion I believe that every year this motion, if it be made, will be made under worse auspices and with less prospect of success. (Hear.) Let the Church remain tolerant, temperate, and comprehensive, and it will then be truly national. Do not let it suppose that every party which arises in its bosom—and parties have arisen in the Church from the days of the siege of Jerusalem—gives sign of coming dissolution. Let it remember that the varying mental types and the varying passions of mankind require spiritual interpreters as various; that some minds will take refuge in symbols and ceremony, and others will find support in the inspiration of enthusiasm. If the Church acts in this spirit, appealing, as it will appeal every year more and more to an educated people, I cannot believe that the policy of the hon. member for Bradford will find increased support. (Hear, hear.) On the contrary, I believe that the sympathies of a cultivated nation will more and more be excited in favour of the Church—the Anglican Church—of this country. (Cheers.) The hon. gentleman does not seem to be unconscious of the difficulties of the task in case the House accedes to his proposal. Those difficulties are very considerable. It appears to me that if he were successful we might count certainly upon at least a

generation of disturbances. (Cheers.) Is that a result which the House or the country desire or expect? Both parties in the State have been for the last forty years busy in dealing with great questions and carrying measures of great importance, the wisdom of some of which has been questioned, as well as the means by which others have been carried out. But whatever may have been the controversy at the moment when these measures have once been passed, all parties in the State have done their best to insure the success of these measures so that they might work for the general well-being. (Hear, hear.) Although I am not prepared to wish that the fair progress of this country should for a moment cease, I think the time has come when in matters of great change the country requires repose. (Hear, hear.) It is not desirable that when a Minister rises in the morning he should find that every class in the country is arrayed against him. The time has, I think, arrived when we see the limit of organic change. The God Terminus has been discovered, and if three-and-twenty years of agitation and reconstruction in consequence of the abolition of the Church of England awaits us, I cannot but believe that the future of this country will assume a darker character than I am prepared to hope for. (Cheers.) I trust, therefore, that the House will act upon this question with decision. I wish we had heard from the Secretary of State a more encouraging tone. (Cheers.) I think, although I am sorry to have to say it, that my right hon. friend the member for the University of Dublin was justified in making the remarks he did upon the statement of the right hon. gentleman that Her Majesty's Government was not prepared to support the motion of the hon. member for Bradford, or indeed any motion, unless they were assured of carrying it. (Cheers and laughter.) There are considerations which certainly ought to occur to any prudent Secretary of State who has to consider a Licensing Bill. (Renewed laughter.) I do not think you ought to bring forward a Licensing Bill unless you are assured of carrying it, but when it comes to a question of maintaining the union between Church and State, I think your adhesion to the proposal, or your objection to it, should be founded on some principle which cannot be disputed, and guided by some policy which the country can comprehend. (Cheers.) I still hope we shall hear from the Prime Minister sounds of a very different character, and I do most earnestly trust that the House will give forth to-night no uncertain sound in the division upon this question, but will meet it with an unbroken front. (Cheers.) I shall oppose the motion sincerely in the interest of civil and religious liberty, more for the sake of the State than of the Church, more for the sake of society than of the congregation, but most of all because I believe that in opposing a policy such as is set forth in the motion of the hon. gentlemen, we are maintaining the best interests of the whole country, upholding its laws, its civilisation, its pure religion, and all which contributes, now as heretofore, to the happiness of England. (Loud cheers.)

MR. GLADSTONE: The subject which has been introduced to the notice of the House by my hon. friend the member for Bradford, in a tone that has drawn forth the most just eulogiums from every quarter of the House, is one which undoubtedly might well occupy us for many evenings were we to attempt anything like a thorough discussion of its various bearings; but I do not understand it to be the wish of the House that our discussion should be thus prolonged. (Hear, hear.) That being so, I make no apology for rising to offer what I hope will be a very few remarks upon a question of so great magnitude. I say a very few remarks, because I am able to follow in many respects, and to a considerable extent, what has been said in various quarters in opposition to the motion of my hon. friend. (Hear, hear.) The challenge of the right hon. gentleman is a fair one when he desires to know the position of the Government; but I am not prepared to admit that he correctly comprehended, or that, correctly comprehending, he correctly stated, the language of my right hon. friend the Secretary of State to have been that we, as a Government, would propose nothing except what we were assured of carrying. The right hon. gentleman, unconsciously, no doubt, modified a good deal the tone and the terms of my right hon. friend's expression, having in view the lively contrast which he was about to draw in reference to another measure. ("Hear, hear," and a laugh.) What my right hon. friend said, if I understood him, was this—he referred to the state of public opinion upon this question as one among the reasons why he was not prepared to vote for the motion of my hon. friend, and, in so referring to the state of public opinion he is sustained by an authority no less than that of the right hon. gentleman (Mr. Disraeli), who argued this question generally in a tone moderate and rational, and was himself content to rest his defence of the Established Church in England, not so much upon adhesion to any abstract theory or principle as upon the fact that the convictions of the nation are in its favour; or, in other words, that public opinion is adverse to the motion of my hon. friend. (Cheers.) The Government oppose the motion—(renewed cheers)—and I, for my own part, do not at all profess to limit that opposition

to the present occasion. (Loud cheers.) We institute no inquisition into the personal opinions of any with whom we are associated in political life, but we are adverse to the motion, and neither my right hon. friend near me (Mr. Bruce), nor, so far as I know, any other member of the Government, is at all prepared to treat it as a question of to-day with regard to which our course is to be altered to-morrow. (Hear, hear.) I must say that I think the speech of the right hon. and learned gentleman the member for the University of Dublin (Dr. Ball) had better not have been delivered. (Hear, hear.) Its ascriptions of language and sentiment to my right hon. friend (Mr. Bruce) were so vehement and so inaccurate, and the whole tone of the speech was so evident—I won't say intended, but calculated to introduce into this discussion considerations of party by which it could only be lowered and debased (cheers), that I felt, what I rarely feel, regret that I was listening to the right hon. gentleman. And I am bound to say, further, that I do not think the right hon. gentleman is entitled to be very critical upon the manner in which we defend the Established Church. Others may be so, but it appeared to me that of all the defenders of the Established Church of England the very worst on this occasion has been the right hon. gentleman, for he defended it exclusively by going back among the ancient controversies upon the Church of Ireland, and appeared to think, as he and others thought at the period of that controversy, that the same rules, circumstances, and considerations which governed the mind of Parliament in the case of the Church of Ireland were those which were likewise applicable to the Church of England. I know very well it is an opinion that may be not unfairly entertained upon the other side of the House, by gentlemen from their point of view, that those who solicited Parliament to disestablish and disendow the Church of Ireland had given an impulse to the motion of my hon. friend; but I hold, further, that it is not unfair for us to maintain that the impulse has rather been aided by what we think the unfortunate error of persons who insisted upon treating the case of the Church of Ireland entirely with reference to the theory of Establishments and not with reference to the broad substantial arguments and facts upon which the Church of England was so strong. The Church of England is not a foreign Church—that is to say, not a Church which, like the Church of Ireland, was imposed upon Ireland and maintained there by extrinsic power, but it is, whatever else it may be, the growth of the history and traditions of the country. (Cheers.) I will not refer to other matters connected with the Church of Ireland more than to take exception to that part of the motion of my hon. friend in which he asks the House to affirm that it is expedient to apply to the Established Church, not a principle of disestablishment, but the policy initiated by the disestablishment of the Irish Church by the Act of 1869. My hon. friend is perfectly entitled to use that language for himself, and he may express his individual opinion that in the disestablishment of the Irish Church the Government not only recognised the peculiar circumstances and incidents of the case, but likewise gave effect to a general principle of great importance. The hon. gentleman himself said in the course of the discussion that preceded the passing of the Irish Church Act,—"Neither the Establishment of the Church of England nor the principle of Church Establishment was at issue now, it was simply a matter of political justice to the people of Ireland." But, so far as the Government is concerned, honour as well as prudence requires that we should ask it to clearly and most emphatically understood that with us the proposal for the disestablishment of the Church in Ireland was not the initiation of a policy. (Hear, hear.) In stating this, I stated no more than it was my duty to state, though I am sorry to say without the desired effect upon the electors of Lancashire in 1868, and not only so, but the very best of my friends and the best Nonconformists from time to time, as they know very well, gave me explicit warning to make that matter clear to the electors of Lancashire. It was on one part steadily contended from first to last that, whether the principle of Establishment were right or wrong, it was impossible to justify the continued existence of the Establishment in Ireland; for us, therefore, it was not the enunciation of a policy. Notwithstanding the ability with which my hon. friend spoke, he must have felt he was addressing an audience little prepared, except in a special quarter, to comply with his demands; but I cannot wonder that he has been encouraged to make his motion; and in one sense I must tender him my thanks for introducing it. By introducing this question he has absorbed minor matters which really involve his motion as an ulterior consequence, but which do not fully express it. We have been accustomed to motions for the exclusion of the Bishops from the House of Lords, a question more intimately connected with the welfare of the Church as a religious society than with the constitution of the House of Lords, or with the position of the Church as a National Establishment; we have motions also for the disestablishment of the Church in Wales. My hon. friend has, I think, wisely passed by these collateral issues, and raised the question in a clear, comprehensive, and manly manner, calculated to keep it from all debasing contact and to raise a fair trial of the great national question involved in the motion. My hon. friend is doubtless encouraged by what has occurred in America and in the colonies, and partly by what has occurred in Ireland; partly,

also, by what is occurring on the continent—for it is clear that upon the whole the tendency of the public sentiment is towards the relaxation of those bonds which in several countries connect religion with the State. (Hear, hear.) There is another point to which it is more painful, but still necessary, to refer, and that is the internal condition of the Church of England itself. My hon. friend's remarks upon this point recalled to my mind a passage spoken by Sir Robert Peel in the year 1848 in the course of his speech on the bill for the removal of Parliamentary disabilities affecting the Jews. He was at that time rebuking the argument of danger to the Church, and, having stated his opinion that no such danger would arise from the admission of Jews in Parliament, he indicated the opinion that danger had arisen from another cause, in these words:—"Were it not for internal dissensions within the Church itself, the Church would be stronger at this moment, after the excessive relaxations of disabling laws, than it was ever at the period when you required conformity to the faith of the Church as an essential qualification for Parliament." These words were eminently true, but, looking at what has happened since the year 1848, although I do not know that the causes of the controversy are more substantial than they were then—I think probably they are less so—yet, undoubtedly, the temper in which they are handled has reached a degree of excitement, and almost of exasperation, which has resulted in constant efforts to bring them to an issue of judicial sentences, aiming at the compulsory enforcement of usages or of opinions in a manner and to an extent which I must own is calculated greatly to darken the future prospect of the Church. (Cheers.) From these causes the hon. member for Bradford has derived a great accession of strength; but the connection between these exasperated controversies and the proceedings of this evening will convey a warning to persons out of doors. (Hear, hear.) When I come to the objections to the motion of my hon. friend, I would contend, as I have always contended, that this motion is far more readily to be understood and justified as a merely abstract expression of opinion at the head of a literary essay than it is as embodying the terms of a practical proposition to be adopted by such a Legislature as ours. (Hear, hear.) Can there be words more absolute than those of the motion? What is the time pointed at by it? Is it, as we read this morning in an influential journal, within this century that this is to be? Is that the latitude the hon. member allows us, or at least the younger members of this House, who may possibly be responsible for the conduct of public affairs at the close of this century. If so the justification of his motion lies simply in the fact of the impracticability of its adoption, because if it were a motion which the House was likely to pass I should protest against anything so vague or general in its scope and giving so little in the way of practical pledge to the country. Has my hon. friend considered the vastness of the operation to which he recommends the House to give its sanction? We have faced the disestablishment of the Irish Church, and I must own that when we were engaged in the operation it appeared to me to be, taking together its principles and its details, among the largest to which a Legislature could well apply itself. But the question of the Irish Church shrinks into insignificance—I mean material insignificance—beside the question of the English Church. It is not the number of its members or the millions of its revenue; it is the mode in which it has been from a period shortly after the Christian era, and has never for 1,800 years ceased to be the Church of the country—(Hear)—having been at every period ingrained with the hearts and the feelings of the people, and having intertwined itself with the local habits and feelings, so that I do not believe there lives the man who could either define the amount and character of the work my hon. friend would have to undertake were he doomed to be responsible for the execution of his own propositions, or who could in the least degree define or anticipate the consequences by which it would be attended. I own my inability to look in the face that much more Herculean task which my hon. friend by his motion proposes to lay upon us. But, Sir, that is not the only reason why I object to the motion of my hon. friend. If that were the only reason, no doubt my hon. friend would most properly turn to the indications conveyed in the speech of my hon. friend the member for Huddersfield (Mr. Leatham), who evidently looks with ill-concealed contempt upon the weakness of those by whom it is his unhappy destiny, at least in a political sense, to be led. (A laugh.) My hon. friend revealed in himself the consciousness of strength, and force, and superior power to us; and he intimated that by a different composition of the Cabinet the aspirations of genuine Liberals might receive a speedy and satisfactory accomplishment. Then he said, "Are we, a party of Dissenters, to follow a Cabinet of Churchmen?" (Laughter.) Now, in the first place, I don't think the Cabinet is a Cabinet of Churchmen. It is certainly not armed at the threshold with any test which it applies to those who undergo the mysterious operation that makes a man a member either of the Government or of the Cabinet, and I rather believe that the Nonconforming element, whether it be represented in the Roman Catholic Church or among the Protestants, is at any rate more hopelessly represented in the present than in any former Cabinet. But when I hear my hon. friend challenge the Government broadly, and by so many words, how a party of

Dissenters is to follow a Cabinet of Churchmen, I answer not only that I rejoice to reckon among our official body many gentlemen of great ability and high character who do not belong to the communion of the Church of England, but also that I greatly doubt whether those words used by the hon. member would entirely suit our purpose to employ in the course of canvassing the different constituencies of the country. No doubt my hon. friend indicates a course of future campaigns which may relieve us—if he acts consistently with his language—at an early date from the responsibilities of office. He says, and says with great truth, that the Nonconformist body of this country constitutes a most powerful part—perhaps the most active, vigorous, and vital part—of the whole Liberal party; and I do not conceal from myself for a moment that it is in the power of those who lead the Nonconformist party at any time to break up and shatter, if they think fit, the general fabric of the Liberal party. But my hon. friend, I am sure, will not be the man to say that such a consideration as that is to be—as his speech really at one time seemed to indicate—the governing motive in our minds in the course that we are to take in regard to great national institutions. (Hear, hear.) Let us strive to rise to somewhat nobler views. Let my hon. friend by all means pursue the course he thinks best for the interests of liberty and of truth; but let him, at any rate, leave to us the same power and right to act according to the best of our lights and our consciences in the performance of the duties with which, whether worthily or unworthily, we are charged. (Hear, hear.) Sir, it is satisfactory that there has been a general disposition shown in this debate to do justice to the Church of this country in the discharge of its duties; and, as I have ventured to criticise one part of the speech of the hon. member for Huddersfield, I must also express the pleasure with which I listened to the early portion of it, and also to the remarks of other speakers to-night in which the way the ministers of the Church devote themselves according to the best of their light and understanding, to the duties of their office, and the benefit of their fellow-countrymen, was not only admitted, but largely and liberally acknowledged. The words which the hon. member for Bradford quoted—I rather think from some one else—appeared to me to be a perfectly true and unexaggerated description of the position of the clergyman as he is in a very large number of the districts of this country, and especially in the rural districts, when he stated that he was the centre of education, of charity, and of piety. (Hear.) I don't now enter into the question of what would happen were the national recognition of religion to be discontinued. I stand merely upon the fact. Nor is it alone on the discharge of practical duties that the Church of England stands pre-eminent. It is certainly a Church eminently favourable to liberty of thought, while I think my hon. and learned friend the member for Richmond is right in repudiating on its behalf the claim of those who wish to construe that liberty as if it meant an unbounded licence. It is favourable to human culture at large—it is favourable to that profound learning which has adorned the clergy of this Church in a degree, speaking historically, inferior, I believe, to that of no Church of Christendom. (Hear, hear.) It has been favourable to national education, and although it has not been so forward, perhaps, or so energetic in the movements of this country in favour of political liberty, yet those who will go back even to the reign of Charles I., and will consider how many members of the Church there were—and there were then a great number—who were among the champions of political liberty—(Hear, hear)—those who go back to the reign of James II., and consider how civil liberty had then become so strong that its triumph was assured, will not fail to see that even in that respect the Church was not altogether wanting. (Hear.) Well; this is the case of the Church as a religious institution, and those who are much attached to her and who have endeavoured to study her character may well point likewise to the position she occupies not only in this country, but in Christendom. For be it recollected, that among the most devoted—nay, among the most active—even of the partisans of the Roman Catholic Church there have been those who have found themselves constrained by the force of truth to acknowledge that the Church of England—notwithstanding all her faults and defects, whatever they may be—has filled a position such as was occupied by no other Church in the world with reference to the future of Christendom. It is no slight question, Sir, to consider what are to be hereafter the relations of religion to what is termed science, and I believe that if there be a hope for the continuance of those relations in a healthy state, that hope is chiefly lodged within the bounds of the communion which has been called the Church of England. (Hear, hear.) I say chiefly lodged. Don't let it be supposed I mean that it is to be found nowhere else. I mean that in that antagonism which unfortunately appears at the present moment to be so sharp between ancient belief and modern thought there is no arena in which that controversy seems to me more likely to be conducted to a happy and a favourable issue than the arena of this Church of England itself. (Hear, hear.) Under these circumstances what is the state of facts with which we have to deal? The right hon. gentleman the member for Buckinghamshire fairly admits that he takes his stand on the state of facts. My hon. friend the member for Bradford, I think, avoided stating that his motion expressed the prevailing opinion of the people of this country;

nor, with all the attention I could give to this debate, have I heard such an assertion made by any of the supporters of the motion. Sir, I may be entirely wrong, but I would frankly state my own opinion that entire justice has not yet been done on one point to the Church of England. It is with regard to the question of numbers. My hon. and learned friend the member for Richmond stated that he thought that Church might fairly be taken as having a number of members equal to those of all the other religious bodies in England and Wales. [An Hon. Member: "Professed members."] I was going to say, I think she has a good many more, because I must own it is my conviction that in professed members the Church of England has a considerable majority of the people of this country. (Hear, hear.) I know that the returns of public worship show about an equality of numbers as between the Church and the other bodies; but then I at once admit to my hon. friend that the Dissenters, as such, represent a higher average of religious observance. There is no doubt at all about that. There are happily vast numbers of persons in the Church of England who are deeply attached to their Church as what may be called practising Christians, but there are also vast numbers not so deeply attached to her, who occasionally conform to her communion, not because they belong to any other religious body, but because they are not in the constant and habitual observance of religious ordinances. What view are we to take with regard to them? Are we to say that because they only rarely appear within the walls of the Church they only come there to be christened, to be married, or to be buried—(a laugh)—seeing that this is not the case of the Irish Church, the blunder is scarcely excusable? ("Hear," and a laugh.) Are we to say that the case of those persons is to be put out of the account? In my opinion, that is a very serious and important question indeed. (Hear, hear.) There is no doubt, whatever, of the capability of the Church of England to provide for its members in the same way that the Nonconformist communities provide for theirs. I apprehend that it is insulting to the Church of England to question its power in that respect, and further, that it is unjust to that community to say that its members, being more cold in religious matters, ought not to be taken into account. When we look at the relations of the Church of England to those masses who have grown up almost unheeded, but who retain a certain relation to it, and towards whom the Church performs almost a missionary work, it is impossible that I can admit the proposition that we ought to cast those masses out of the account. I cannot help perceiving the great changes that may occur in the religious condition of those persons in relation to the Church. Take the case of Leeds before and after the days of Dr. Hook. Such a man possessing a real sense of his vocation leaves a mark upon the religious character of the population for generations to come. (Hear, hear.) The work to which the Church has been devoting herself from year to year with great energy is so important in both a religious and a social sense that it must affect seriously the deliberations of this House, and must exercise an important effect in checking the impetuosity of those who may be disposed to jump to rash conclusions in consequence of the view they may take of the defects of the Church of England. I cannot but stand upon the firm conviction that the nation which sent us here does not wish us to adopt the motion of the hon. member. (Cheers.) I was struck by the few words which were spoken by the right hon. gentleman opposite, who on this occasion presented a petition signed by 21,000 ratepayers of Bradford against the motion of the hon. member. I apprehend that the population of Bradford is not very different from the rest of the population of the North, and if the population of the North differs from that of the South in any way it is that the population of the South is upon the whole more generally attached to the National Church. (Cheers.) I do not think that it is necessary for us—indeed, I don't think the hon. gentleman expects that we should do so—to vote for a motion which we are firmly convinced is at variance with the established convictions of the country, and I shall venture to say to my hon. friend what I am sure he will not resent, that if he seeks to convert the majority of the House of Commons to his opinions he must begin by undertaking the preliminary work of converting to those opinions the majority of the people of England. (Loud cheers from the Opposition.)

Mr. MIALI, in reply, thanked hon. members for the indulgence with which they had received his opening statement, and expressed his opinion that the House, by listening with so much attention, silence, and good temper to statements which must have been repugnant to the feelings of a large majority on both sides, had raised its character as a deliberative assembly to the highest pitch. He must remind the right hon. gentleman for Buckinghamshire, who had charged him with obtaining his knowledge of the feeling of the country upon this subject from Blue-books, that for upwards of ten years he had been a Dissenting minister in the rural districts—that he had been among the people and had seen the actual working of the system he had proposed to put an end to, and it was what he had then learnt that had induced him to apply himself to the task of endeavouring to bring about the separation of the Church from the State. On questions of this magnitude, it was always right that those who brought them forward should prove their sincerity by taking it to a vote, and he therefore felt called upon to trouble the House to divide upon

his motion. He and those who thought with him were fully aware that they would be in a minority, and they expected to be in a minority for some little time to come, but that House had seen a great many of the minorities of to-day become the majorities of to-morrow, and notwithstanding what had been said by the head of the Government he felt satisfied that the proposition contained in his motion would be carried into effect by the Liberal party, if not under the leadership of the right hon. gentleman, under that of his successor. (Hear, hear.)

The House divided, when the numbers were—
 Ayes 89
 Noes 374
 Majority —285
 The House adjourned at one o'clock.

Imperial Parliament.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

THE LORDS AND UNIVERSITY TESTS.

The House of Lords on Monday went into committee on the University Tests Bill, which had come up from the Commons.

The Marquis of SALISBURY, in moving the principal amendment recommended by the select committee, said that the measure had come up to their lordships recommended by a large majority in the other House and a strong agitation out of doors. But it would not have escaped their lordships' notice that those who urged a relaxation of tests might be divided into two classes. The larger of those classes consisted of the orthodox Dissenters, whose motive was to obtain political equality and social standing. Such persons formed the mass of those who had taken part in the movement, but those who pulled the wires were men of a different temperament. They were men who desired that that system of theology which had always been considered as Christianity in this country should no longer be taught, and that religious should be placed in a position very far inferior to secular learning. They were men who, though few in number, were distinguished for ability; and the mixed motives of the assailants of tests had placed a very complicated problem before the committee. The object of their report, however, was to draw a strongly-marked line between the two classes in question. Whatever the claims of the Church, they were ready to concede to the orthodox Nonconformists what they wished. They valued, of course, the secular rights of the Church, but they treated them as dirt in comparison to the supremacy of religious belief. They were unwilling, then, to throw open all the endowments of the Universities, but they held that the office of teaching rested in a very different position. (Hear, hear.) The first objection which he supposed the noble earl opposite would bring against his amendment was that the proposed test would be unavailing for its purpose. No doubt it would be easy, as a matter of legal obligation, to drive a coach-and-four through it; but he did not look to any enforcement of it by courts of law; he intended it only as a question of honour, and in that sense he felt sure it would be perfectly sufficient for the purpose. In these days, when questions of honour were, he regretted to say, so much stronger than those of conscience, he felt sure that it would not err on the side of inefficiency. The fault of previous tests was that they were too minute; but he did not think that that could be alleged against the one he now proposed. Then the question arose, If the new test was sufficient, ought it to be imposed? It might be said that if you only let the colleges alone, they would make their teaching religious. Of course they would; but unfortunately Parliament would not leave them alone. It had interfered with them in every way, and it had therefore taken upon itself those duties towards the parents of the country which had formerly belonged to the colleges. The mention of parents might be considered uncongenial to university studies. No doubt it was true that the popular theory of a parent was that he was an inconvenient appendage to an undergraduate. (A laugh.) He (the noble marquis) repudiated, however, such an idea. He looked upon the question as one between the employer and the employed. The Universities ought to be regarded as machines employed by parents to educate their sons, and it was the duty of Parliament to remove the poison that rendered colleges distasteful to those who employed them. The bitter enmity to Christianity so rife on the Continent prevailed to a very much narrower extent in England, but there were several high-class publications which made it their business to break down the belief on which the hopes of Christianity rested. Lord Salisbury then proceeded to read extracts from the evidence of Mr. Charles Appleton, Fellow of St. John's College, a Liberal witness, who stated that the present course of study at Oxford had a tendency to uproot the faith of young men. (Cheers.) He (the noble marquis) understood that cheer; but the present system was not one of deliberate opposition to religious belief. It arose from the fact that young men were driven by the brevity of their University career to the exclusive study of Kant, Hegel, Herbert Spencer, and other metaphysicians. Mr. Appleton's evidence was confirmed by Mr. Ince and Canon Liddon. This, then, was no controversy between Church and

Dissent. The noble lord then referred to the letters published some time ago in the *Times* respecting the religious condition of Germany, where people were afraid to go to church lest they should be regarded as hypocrites or sentimental enthusiasts. The question was whether their lordships should lay aside the old maxim, "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom," and that was the issue which he fearlessly laid before the House and the country. (Loud cheers.) Lord Salisbury, in conclusion, moved his new test, namely "I, A. B., solemnly declare that, while holding the office of —, I will not teach any opinion opposed to the teaching and Divine authority of the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testament."

The Earl of KIMBERLEY emphatically denied that the issue was one between Christianity and Infidelity or Atheism, and he complained that the noble lord had acted on the principle of give a dog a bad name when he sought to identify University reform with the teaching of unbelief. The issue was whether it was advisable not only to maintain the old tests, but even to invent a new one. He had certainly listened with some curiosity to hear how the noble marquis would defend such a startling novelty as a new test. The House had been told how completely the present tests had failed; and to have been consistent the noble lord would have proposed to forbid the reading of metaphysical books, and to establish an "Index Expurgatorius." He must say that nothing had astonished him so much as the evidence of the Dean of St. Paul's, who had spoken of the pernicious effects of such studies, but who had certainly never hesitated to place metaphysical books before his pupils. No doubt some that read those books would draw convictions from them that their lordships might deplore, but he had little doubt that the great majority would come out of the trial unscathed, and would in their after-life bear witness to the soundness of the principles in which they had been educated. (Hear, hear.) Then who was to interpret this declaration? Nothing could be more vague. What was "opposed to the teaching and Divine authority of the Holy Scriptures"? He (Lord Kimberley) declared he should have the greatest possible difficulty in answering that question. If he had himself taken the test there would be no science that he should feel he could teach. If he taught geology or astronomy, for instance, he should feel that he might be charged with contradicting the Bible, and taunted with having broken his promise. The fact was, the Universities must always be the reflex of national thought, and it was idle to seek by means of tests to create an artificial tone in them. (Cheers.)

The Bishop of GLOUCESTER and BRISTOL expressed his belief that the bill, unless amended, would bring a judgment upon the country, for it was a grave matter, directly and indirectly, by action or inaction, to promote the rise of irreligious, creedless, and, it might be, godless Universities. (Cheers.)

The Archbishop of YORK desired to recall the House to the real question before it. (Cheers.) The college statutes which declared that fellows were to be elected for their ability to render their colleges places of learning and religion, were not going to be altered. (Cheers.) If it were true—which, however, he denied—that Oxford was steeped in infidelity, what a comment that fact would be upon the present system of tests! And if the proposed test was the true panacea for the evil, why did not the Church of England propose to adopt it in the stead of those on which it at present relied? So long as the country valued religion, so long would the teaching of the Universities be religious; and if the country should ever cease to value religion, this test would not prevent the Universities from following its example. (Cheers.) This new test had every vice which such a document could possess. Mr. Voysey would not object to it, but on the other hand, to men of sensitive conscience, it was a test of the most powerful grasp and the most extended reach. (Cheers.) Parliament was about to change the relations between the Universities and the Church of England. No doubt the prospects of religion gave anxiety to noble lords on both sides of the House; but he should have no hope for religion at all if he could only rest it on such a test as this. (Cheers.) They must depend rather upon stirring up religious thought and endeavouring to assist those who are labouring to promote it. Three-fourths of the teaching of the country was in the hands of the Church of England; and that being the case, he felt sure there was no danger that the Universities would ever sink into infidelity and irreligion.

The Duke of SOMERSET expressed his intense gratification at hearing such a speech from the most rev. prelate. Suppose they did send down this test to Oxford, what would Oxford do with it? Had not Oxford men long ago taught how tests might be taken in a non-natural sense? (Cheers.) Nothing had, in fact, so much shocked the religious feeling of the country as that mode of retaining the emoluments of the Church of England whilst rejecting its doctrines. (Cheers.) If the House of Commons should be weak enough to accept the amendment it would spoil the bill, and he doubted not that it had been devised with that very object. (Cheers.) Now this test was to protect Christianity. Well, Christianity might survive even it, but it would certainly owe nothing to it in the way of protection. (Laughter.)

The Earl of HARROWBY supported the amendment.

The Bishop of LINCOLN implored their lordships

to pause ere they assented to a measure which would strike a heavy blow upon the character of the University, and inflict a great hardship upon parents.

The Marquis of LANSDOWNE objected to the test simply because it was a test; for he believed that a really good test was an impossibility. He feared that if the amendment were carried, those to whom it applied would have occasion to say—

Necessity will make us all forsworn
 Three hundred times within a three years' space.

(Laughter.) Besides, it would not apply to assistant tutors, and what were called "coaches," who bore so large a part in the real work of education. He protested against the notion that the Universities stand to the country as the employed to the employer. It was rather their function, instead of resorting to unworthy means of gathering popularity, to raise the standard of education.

After a few words from Lord STANLEY of ALDERLEY,

The Bishop of OXFORD admitted that, like the Archbishop of York, his opinion on this subject had undergone a change. Arguing that tests were not the means by which the religious character of the Universities could be maintained, he said that the effect of the tests would probably merely be to exclude Jews from Fellowships. He trusted that their lordships would not send down to Oxford a bill which, if this test were superadded, would only offer fresh ground of discord, and cited the example of Keble College to show that a college might be religious without tests or endowments.

The Earl of CARNARVON insisted that the amendment would give the Dissenters all that they really required, and warned them against the dangerous alliances which the secularists wished to make with them.

The Bishop of CARLISLE examined the classes of University officers to whom the proposed test would apply, and showed that many of them were clergymen to whom it would be an insult; that others had nothing to do with the teaching of religion; and that as regarded the rest, it would do no good. The real security of religion would be in the appointment of good men.

The Bishop of SALISBURY, speaking as a friend, and as a head master, who had sent thousands of young men to the University, said he had often done so with a heavy heart, for there had swept over Oxford a flood of scepticism and infidelity of a most serious character. The amendment would not prove much security, but such as it was he gave it hearty support.

Lord WESTBURY had listened with great concern to the dreadful picture which had been drawn of Oxford. How had that dreadful state of things been produced? By the want of tests or of bigotry? (Laughter.) No, it had arisen from regarding the Universities as the special inheritance of the Church of England. The present amendment was a sheer mockery. For God's sake consider whom it would drive from the office of teacher. It would drive away the conscientious and the independent, and it would admit those who cared nothing for honour or religion. Such was their glorious test. To have religious teaching, they must have religious teachers, but this test would not secure the appointment of such men. He sympathised with the object of the noble marquis, but, having spent last Saturday and Sunday at Oxford, he saw nothing to justify the dreadful account which had been given of that University, and which, but for the quarters whence it had proceeded, he should be inclined to stigmatise as slanderous. Give the Universities perfect liberty, and he should fear nothing for their religious character. (Cheers.)

The Bishop of MANCHESTER said that they were asked to impose this new test under the influence of a panic. The description of the tidal wave of infidelity at Oxford was too highly coloured, and he rejoiced that it had not yet reached the higher latitude of Cambridge. With respect to the allegation that religious tests, if abolished in the University, must also be dispensed with in the Church, he denied the parity of the two cases.

Lord CHELMSFORD (who had relieved Lord Redesdale in the chair) then put the question, and though the "Not-Contents" immensely preponderated in point of loudness, he said, "I think the 'Contents' have it"—a decision which called forth a hearty laugh.

The committee then divided—

For the new test 71
 Against it 66-5

The amendment was therefore carried, but the smallness of the majority called forth some cheering on the Government benches.

On Clause 3, Lord SALISBURY moved that the heads of colleges should not be included in the bill. They were responsible for the religious teaching and the chapel service, and it was therefore desirable that they should always be members of the Church of England. Lord KIMBERLEY objected to pass such an insult upon the Nonconformist body as to say that they were not fit to be trusted with the morality of the college. As to the chapel service, due provision could be made in such cases for its performance. Their lordships divided, when this amendment was also carried by 57 Contents against 49 Not-Contents.

On the motion of Lord SALISBURY, and after protests by Lord HOUGHTON and Lord KIMBERLEY, an amendment was next carried, by 56 votes against 54, declaring that no statute or ordinance restricting offices to persons in holy orders should be repealed except by authority of Parliament.

Lord LYVEDEN moved an amendment relative to

clerical fellowships, which he described as injurious to the interests of religion and the Universities, and distasteful to the Nonconformists. Lord KIMBERLEY thought it undesirable to enlarge the scope of the bill. Lord ROSEBURY cited cases and read letters to show the injury done to colleges as places of education by clerical fellowships, which narrowed the field of selection for tutors. Lord SALISBURY believed that the last speaker had been misled by his anonymous authorities. If the clerical fellowships disappeared it would be necessary to sell the advowsons and make other compensation for the Church. Lord GRANVILLE complimented Lord Rosebery on the point and ability of his speech, but would not engraft the amendment upon the bill. It seemed to him that there had been indications furnished in the course of the debate which would render it unwise on the part of the Government to take any step which might lead to there being a collision between the two Houses of Parliament on the important subject under discussion. Besides, there was a tacit understanding in the House of Commons on the particular point relating to clerical fellowships and the headships of colleges by which the Government were entitled to have the bill sent to their Lordships' House at an early period, thus avoiding all that delay which might be interposed to its progress through its various stages. The Bishop of OXFORD had no particular desire to keep the clerical fellowships, but so far as his knowledge went, there was no justification for the charges which had been brought against those who held them. Besides, some of the colleges were chiefly dependent for their teaching power on the clerical fellows, for very few of the lay fellows continued to reside at the University. He did not believe that these fellowships were any particular gain to the Church, and he repudiated the insinuation that they were making use of Mammon for the support of religion. Earl GREY would support the amendment if his noble friend went to a division, holding it to be a profanation to induce men to enter into Holy Orders from any low or secular motives. In the Ordination Service candidates were compelled to make a most solemn declaration that they did not take on themselves the charge of the ministry from any motives of that kind, and he did not think Parliament was justified under such circumstances in placing in their way the strongest temptations. The Duke of SOMERSET hoped his noble friend would not press the motion to a division. He should be very glad to support it if he saw a chance of success; but there were now more difficulties than before. The amendment was negatived, and the clause, as amended, agreed to.

The Marquis of SALISBURY proposed a clause providing that the governing body of every college shall provide sufficient religious instruction for all members thereof *in statu pupillari* belonging to the Established Church. The Earl of KIMBERLEY opposed the clause. It would lead to heartburnings by conferring an invidious privilege on the Church of England as contrasted with Nonconformists.

After some observations from the Earl of HARROWBY, and the Bishop of CARLISLE, the clause was added to the bill.

The Marquis of SALISBURY then moved another new clause, providing that no person shall be required to attend any college or university lecture to which his parent or guardian shall object, or which shall be contrary to the tenets of the religious body to which he belongs. The Earl of KIMBERLEY opposed the latter part of the clause. Who was to decide, or how was it to be decided, whether any lecture came within its operation? Or was every undergraduate to be at liberty to withdraw from any lecture which he chose to say was contrary to the tenets of the religious body to which he belonged? After some conversation, the clause, with the omission of the last sentence, was agreed to.

The Marquis of SALISBURY next moved that no fellow, elected after the passing of this Act, shall become one of the governing body of his college unless he has been appointed tutor therein, until after the expiration of three years from the time of his taking the degree of Master of Arts, or Bachelor of Civil Law, Medicine, or Music. Earl GRANVILLE opposed the clause. After some discussion, the Marquis of Salisbury withdrew the clause.

The remaining clauses and schedules were agreed to, and the bill was ordered to be reported.

The House adjourned at twelve o'clock.

HOME MISSIONARY SOCIETY.

The fifty-second annual meeting of this institution was held in Finsbury Chapel, on Tuesday evening, May 9, under the presidency of Henry Wright, Esq.

The CHAIRMAN explained that the absence of Mr. Morley (who had been expected to preside at the meeting) was due to the important debate which was proceeding in the House of Commons, at which he (the hon. member for Bristol) felt it his duty to be present. He (the chairman) being surrounded by one of the noblest staffs of speakers that ever presented themselves on a platform (amongst whom were the noble Earl of Shaftesbury and Count Bernstorff) would at once make way for them by calling upon

The Rev. J. H. WILSON (the secretary of the society) to read the fifty-second annual report of the society, which stated that during the past year the society, with county associations and friends locally interested, had sustained an evangelistic and permanent agency, consisting of 144 home mission pastors and grantees, with 100 lay evangelists, by

this means the Gospel had been preached and Christian work done in 1,044 villages and hamlets in the rural districts of England and Wales. The agents had occupied 237 mission stations, with 745 chapels and mission-rooms, with an average attendance of 50,000 hearers. This agency was ably supported by 237 voluntary lay preachers, and 2,515 Sunday-school teachers and Christian visitors, who conducted house-to-house visitation, and taught upwards of 20,000 children in the village Sunday-schools. Among the immediate and direct results of these agencies had been an addition of more than a thousand members to the fellowship of the mission churches, the awakening of many known to be "anxious inquirers," and the enjoyment of a higher spiritual life amongst the membership.

From Westmoreland, for example, one evangelistic agent writes:—"For six weeks we have had continuous special services, which have been all well attended. Night after night for three weeks the attendance was large, and a deep impression was made on many hearts. Some nights scores, and some nights hundreds, of the village people came to the meetings. At the close of the first series I got assistance; then the chapel became crowded, and many remained after each service for private conversation and prayer. Forty-three became candidates for Christian fellowship."

From Somerset another agent writes:—"We have had a series of evangelistic meetings, which have been largely blessed. I have nine preaching-stations under my care, and at most of them a spirit of deep earnestness and anxious inquiry prevails. At the close of the special services we had a gathering at the central chapel, when the villagers went up to their Jerusalem with their offerings, and in this union meeting we had such an outpouring of the spirit as we never realised before. See! sown in tears during the year now become fruitful, and twenty-three were added to the church."

In Huntingdonshire there have also been revivals of this description, where quiet power, like gravitation, which is silent, has drawn many to Jesus. In one district forty members have been added to the little Christian community.

From Yorkshire we learn that special services had been held in several districts, which were at first but thinly attended; but in the end there was scarcely a mission chapel to be found large enough to hold the people who flocked to the meetings. From Monmouthshire and South Wales we have also tidings of revival.

For more permanent work the regular organisations of the society must be depended on, and their mission churches had gathered up and consolidated the fruits of evangelistic labours, the doings by which agency it was impossible to tabulate. The report speaks in particular of one county where, eight years ago, few of the sixty resident clergy were Evangelical, and the preaching in nearly all the parishes, either formal or ultra-Tractarian:—

To meet this sad state of things the Home Missionary Society established a strong central agency, and gave to each mission pastor the help of a lay evangelist. The great Popish power, used in the sacred name of Protestantism, was soon sensibly weakened. The principal agent there now says, "We have had a remarkable intervention of Divine Providence, which has altogether altered the ecclesiastical complexion of things in this neighbourhood. Not only in this parish have we now an active, earnest, young, and devoted clergyman, but in the adjoining parish the father of Puseyism is dead, and an Evangelical clergyman has been appointed in his stead. About a mile further off, another clergyman of this stamp has been stationed; while in a fourth, a similar change has taken place. The Wesleyans have also come into the field. I now find it hard work to maintain my position; yet, although there is a good deal of the old leaven still amongst us, and Ritualism is not flaunted in our faces as formerly, although a semi-Evangelical preaching in some quarters prevails; though landlord influence is strong; and the whole combined, greatly overshadows our small churches; I never knew the neighbourhood so well supplied with excellent and hard-working clergy as at present, and, therefore, I cannot but be thankful for the good already done."

The report then referred to the promising condition of recently-formed churches in Rugby, Brompton (Kent), Broadstairs, Sevenoaks, New Hampton, Wolverton, West Down, Ridgway, and Amberley; and Canton, in Cardiff, and in two other new districts in South Wales. Some of these churches promise soon to be self-supporting, and, like those of Margate, Herne Bay, Folkestone, London-road, Brighton, Hershams, Hythe, Middleboro', and Redcar, all of which were established, or for a time chiefly supported, by this society, now for the most part contribute to its funds. During the past year the grouping of villages had proceeded hopefully, there being now thirty grouped stations instead of ten seven years ago. To facilitate this desirable object, village chapels and mission-rooms had been largely built, especially in Sussex, where eleven now exist, in connection with which there is now an aggressive pastorate and an active evangelical agency. The lay and colporteur evangelists are increasing in numbers and efficiency. There are now a hundred evangelists at work in various villages throughout the country, whose labours were incessant in holding meetings, visiting, and distributing the Scriptures and religious tracts and periodicals. In conclusion, the report refers to the great work yet to be accomplished in the rural districts, and the friends and supporters of the society are appealed to, not only to sustain the present agency, but to put new labourers in the field.

The Treasurer's account stated that the income of the society during the past year had been £8,860, and the expenditure £6,539, leaving a balance in hand of £321.

Mr. W. R. SPICER read the cash statement, which showed a balance of cash in hand amounting to £320 16s. 7d.

Dr. RALEIGH (of Canonbury) moved:—

That this meeting receives and adopts the report now read

with devout thankfulness to God for the blessings He hath been pleased to bestow on the agency employed, and earnestly commends the society to the continued confidence and increased support of the friends of home evangelisation.

This society was, he said, so thoroughly good—so simple, clear, natural, and evangelical in its structure, spirit, and aims, that there seemed to be nothing more to say about it except to ask that the report should be read again and again. Yet he knew that Christian men in their work needed, and were much aided by, words of good cheer. As lovers of their country they could not express their patriotism in any better form—or, indeed, in any form as high and pure and good as when bidding God speed to the leaders of such a society as that. England could be made pure and good, and all that a nation with her great history and high pretensions ought to be, only in proportion as in one way or another, were diffused among the people effectually the pure principles of Divine truth, and the pure morals of revealed religion. These were times in which events sink rapidly into the distance. Not long since the mass of the people had been endowed with the political franchise—some might think improperly so—others unnecessarily, and a good many hastily and without adequate preparation by education; but the thing was done, and the most powerful Government that ever held the reins of power in this country could not now take the franchise from the people of England—(cheers)—but it might be made the means and occasion of boundless benefit and blessing, and that needed to be done by some great organisation, for safe they were not, and could not be so long as large masses of people in crowded cities or away in country places were endowed with political power and left in intellectual darkness, in moral degradation, and of course in spiritual night. He likened such people to a great vessel in a storm with a shifting cargo, and hoped that He who rules all times and seasons would give them time and grace to see that the people far and near were impregnated with the pure principles of Divine truth and endowed with Divine wisdom. He next referred to the legislative measure of education. Without entering upon any matter of debate, he supposed it would be universally granted that the chief object of the day-schools was the impartation of secular instruction, and in a temper of profound charity he would say that, making due allowance for the number of masters who would have no taste for religious instruction or truth, and for the number of those who would have no ability for it, also taking into account the number of places in the country where religious instruction would be thrown very strongly into the ritualistic form, there would be more need than before for a simple and pure Gospel. "Then," said he, "let it come warm and fresh and living from the hearts of the men who know it; from the hearts of the churches in which it is enthroned; from the men who keep it as the secret of their own life, and then it will fall upon the hearts of others—the dark, the weak, the weary, the broken-hearted, the sorrowful—as rain upon the mown grass, and as showers that water the earth. (Cheers.) . . . Is a soldier bound to fight, and if need be to die for his country? Is that the meaning of the uniform he wears? Is the Legislature bound to legislate truly for the common weal? Is a judge bound to administer justice without one particle of partiality? Is that the meaning of the ermine he wears? Then as much—or even still more—a Christian patriot is bound by the force of the same great principle, and in the same solemn Court from which there is no appeal, to do all that he can, if not personally by deputy, and by means that he can control and command, to send out among all the people that truth without which no nation can be pure and strong and good—without which no people in the end, however prosperous they may seem to be, and however far-spreading, can in the end, and in the last resort, be accounted even safe." (Cheers.) If the sentiment expressed by the poet in the line—

England, with all thy faults I love thee still,

was to be anything more than a sentiment and so much sound and vapour "that appeareth for a little time and vanisheth away," then they must put it to the proof, they must yoke it with harness and see what it would do for the people. They were not only to take out of England what was necessary to make themselves comfortable, but also to pour the unsearchable riches of Christ into England's heart—to spread the blessed light of the Gospel far and wide, until it should shine into the darkest and densest corners of the land, and "until all shall know Him, from the least unto the greatest."

The Rev. WM. BRADEN, of the Weigh-house Chapel, seconded the resolution.

The Right Hon. the Earl of SHAFTESBURY (who was received with loud cheers), having made some preliminary remarks in support of the resolution, said that this society was wanted. Almost everything in these days must be aggressive: evil was aggressive to an extent that it never was before; therefore why should they not be aggressive too, and see which would carry the day? Having touched upon his connection with the Established Church, and the diversity of opinion as to whether its advantages or disadvantages preponderate, the noble earl urged the necessity of doing everything that could be done with propriety to bring the masses of the people within the reach of the Gospel, and that the parson and the rector of every church should associate with himself as many working men and women as he could, and tell them that he required no more than that they should have the Bible in their hands and the Bible upon their

lips, to enable them to go forth and do battle with the seething masses of infidelity by which they were surrounded. Unless they had some movement or some organisation like that, he (the noble earl) was sure the country would go to rack and ruin. Elements of disorder were before them in every form and time—disorder in political government and in spiritual things, disorders in mind and in thought—one great mass of anarchy and confusion. Quoting the following remark of a great philosopher, a man of profound science and true piety, "I can only regard the present state of things as that delirium which precedes dissolution," his lordship appealed to the people, while there was yet time—while they were yet awake and had the means and opportunity—to be united heart and soul in the great operation before them. He would not hesitate to say that unless something was done by such agencies as that before them, over the length and breadth of the land, he believed that the future of France—degraded, miserable, lost as she appeared to be—was more full of hope than the future of England. (Cheers.) In support of this view the noble earl drew a contrast between the mercies and privileges vouchsafed to the two countries, and stated that hundreds of years France had been crushed down with the most accursed Government that ever was—ecclesiastical, civil, political, and monarchical. From the outbreak in 1789—afterwards in 1793—to the present time that country had never known internal, and barely external, peace. She had never heard the words of truth from her teachers, and had never had an open Bible, but she had been sunk in the deepest bigotry on the one side, or the most calculating, cold, and hateful infidelity on the other. The noble earl hoped that associations such as this would be multiplied not only over the metropolis, but over the whole of England. There were obstacles in the way, one of which (speaking of it without disparagement) would be the new scheme of education. It was inevitable, and the facts, principles and deeply religious sentiments in which the children had hitherto been brought up, would give place to a much colder theology, or a theology so cold and comfortless as to have in it very little of the principle of real life. They would have to deal with the Sunday-schools, to which he hoped they would go, so as to counteract the coldness and the icy frigidity that must of necessity prevail in the secular institutions. Another danger was seen in the distance. It would be admitted that one of the best signs of the health of a nation was the decent, orderly, quiet observance of the Sabbath. They must know what deep feelings of sorrow and regret its violation had excited in the minds of some men, also the various efforts made at different times in Parliament and out of it to redress the violation of that holy day. All those efforts had failed, and he ventured to predict that they all would fail. He (the noble earl) deprecated the proceedings of some excellent persons—very fussy and very fidgety, who with the best principles, but a total want of judgment, had been going about enforcing the law in such a way as to make it appear that small oppressions were instituted and practised upon the smallest and poorest people. There would be a reaction. It was proposed in Parliament—and unless they were vigorous in opposition it would be carried—that the famous Act of Charles II. should be altogether repealed. If that Act was repealed, it would be equivalent to a declaration that the people of England no longer regarded the Lord's Day in its Divine character, and the consequence would be, that if the prohibitory character of that Act were withdrawn, many people would enter on an entirely new course of conduct, and he (the noble earl) believed that the Sabbath of London would be assimilated to the Sabbath of Paris. Then, he urged them, for heaven's sake, if they valued the peace of their country and the favour of Almighty God, never to allow the Legislature to declare that that day is not to be sanctified, or that it has not directly, or indirectly, the sanction of the law of this country. With reference to the ritualism that would be encountered in the various parishes and places within the scope of the association, the noble earl recommended that no attention should be paid to it, but that they should go straight forward, and if Popery was set up in one place, lift up a protest against it, and, in spite of all opposition, declare that they would make known to the people the Word of God. Looking to the interval which would develop itself between now and the time that God shall put forth His mighty hand, and assert His attributes, the noble earl reminded his hearers that it was for them to meet it, and by this bold front to moderate its attack, assured that, however great impending dangers might be, however serious the perils to the Christianity of England, if it fell it would fall not by the vigour of the attack, but by the weakness of the defence. (Cheers.)

The Rev. DONALD FRASER in further supporting the resolution, confessed that he was a poor, weary man, and that this was the third time within twenty-four hours that he had had the pleasure of hearing Lord Shaftesbury at public meetings, besides attending to many other engagements; and he had only promised to come in, in order to show, as an outsider, his sympathy with those who were interested in the great work of Home Missions. The rev. gentleman, in a speech of considerable length, enforced the claims of the institution to public sympathy and support.

The Rev. E. PAXTON HOOD (of Brighton) moved—That while this meeting has good reason to be satisfied with the work done by the agencies employed, it recognises

with sincere thankfulness the voluntary services of lay preachers and Sunday-school teachers, and desires to express its cordial sympathies with them in the great work, especially among the 30,000 children of the Sunday-schools.

He said he had been asked by a friend to draw a brighter picture, if he possibly could, of the future destinies of England than that already presented; but he declared that he could not do so. He should be disposed to add something to the sombreness rather than to avert, by any words of his, their impressions from the gloom. It seemed to him that all that Christian men could do, and all that Christian hearts could feel, should be put forth this day everywhere throughout the country to magnify the name of our Lord Jesus Christ as the only hope in this world. He could not shut his eyes to the fact that there was occurring in this country a scientific leagued intolerance against everything that seems to have the stamp of Christ's image upon it. In cultured and educated minds, in what were called scientific tendencies, there was a great hatred, deep and profound, to Christ and to Christianity. He (the rev. gentleman) created some sensation by stating that in a poem published by Mr. Swinburne in "Songs before Sunrise," that gentleman deliberately, in melodious and musical English—rich in fancy and imagery—stands before the cross of the Lord Jesus Christ and curses Christ—as he imagined—to His face, calling upon Him to come down from the cross. He urged the necessity of sending forth men who would instil the light and the love of the Creator into the hearts of the people. John Wesley was referred to as a man of large and lasting works, which were due to his earnest and continual prayer, the need of which was very strongly and powerfully enforced by the rev. gentleman.

Count BERNSTORFF, in seconding the resolution, dwelt upon the Sunday-school aspect of the question—not only with regard to the fact that the Sunday-school helped to lay the foundation for the future Church, and was calculated to bring the children to the Lord in early youth, but also to the fact that the work would tell upon the soul of the teacher, whom it would bring into closer contact with the Lord and with His Bible, and would exercise upon his character a visible influence.

The Rev. L. D. BEVAN supported the resolution in a long speech, in which he dealt with the question of home missions in their application to the Principality of Wales.

Births, Marriages, and Deaths.

BIRTH.

THEOBALD.—May 5, at 68, Torrion-avenue, the wife of William Theobald, of a son.

MARRIAGES.

ELLINGTON—LEONARD.—April 29, at the Congregational Church, Clifton, by the Rev. D. Thomas, B.A., and the Rev. H. C. Leonard, M.A., Edward Bernard Ellington, Esq., of Dee Bank, Aintree, younger son of H. R. Ellington, Esq., of Blackheath, to Edith Louisa, eldest daughter of the late Robert Leonard, jun., Esq., of Bristol.

COOTE—HOLMDEN.—On Wednesday, May 3, by special license, at Mutley Baptist Chapel, Plymouth, by the Rev. J. M. Charlton, M.A., Albert, third son of Thomas Coote, Esq., St. Ives, Hunts, to Sarah Catherine, second daughter of W. J. Holmden, Esq., Plymouth.

STENT—MORGAN.—May 3, at the Congregational Church, Warminster, by the Rev. E. T. Prust, the Rev. W. Herbert Stent, of Northampton, to Ellen, third daughter of Mr. W. Morgan, of Warminster.

DEATH.

FLETCHER.—May 8, at Christchurch, Mrs. Mary Fletcher, relict of the late Rev. Joseph Fletcher, D.D., in her 84th year.

Advertisements.

WANTED, after Midsummer, by a GRADUATE (London), a RE-ENGAGEMENT as ASSISTANT-MASTER in a Private School.—Address, B. A., Eversfield Library, St. Leonard's-on-Sea.

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The ANNUAL MEETING of this Society will be held (D.V.) in the LARGE HALL, WILLIS'S ROOMS, KING STREET, ST. JAMES'S, on THURSDAY, May 11, at 5 p.m.

All who are interested in the progress of the Gospel in Turkey, Persia, Syria, Egypt, and Arabia, are earnestly invited to be present.

Speakers personally acquainted with the Christian Missions in these Lands will address the Meeting.

Admission without Ticket.

ASSOCIATION at CAMBRIDGE for the REMOVAL of RELIGIOUS DISABILITIES from the UNIVERSITY.

At a Meeting of the Committee of the above Association, held May 4, 1871, it was resolved:—

"That this Committee expresses its strong disapproval of the Test proposed by the Committee of the House of Lords, contained in its third Resolution, as creating a new Religious Disability."

NEVILLE GOODMAN, M.A., } Hon. Secs.
T. N. TOLLER, M.A. }

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DONATIONS and SUBSCRIPTIONS are earnestly solicited, and will be thankfully received by JOSEPH SOUL, Secretary.

73, Cheapside.

All the accounts are open to the inspection of Governors.

THE INSCRIPTION STONE for NEW SCHOOL PREMISES in CHURCH-STREET, MILE-END NEW TOWN, will be laid by Sir JAMES TYLER, D.L., J.P., on TUESDAY, May 16th, 1871, at 4 p.m.

A PUBLIC MEETING will be held in the Evening at TRINITY CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH, JONATHAN DUTHOIT, Esq., will take the Chair at Seven.

GRATEFUL ACKNOWLEDGMENT and SPECIAL APPEAL.

The COMMITTEE of the ALEXANDRA ORPHAN-AGE for INFANTS very gratefully acknowledge the following SPECIAL GIFTS made to the Charity, under the peculiar circumstances which they beg to state. In the month of July, 1868, the foundation-stone of the new buildings at Hornsey-rose was laid by Her Grace the Duchess of Sutherland. Since that time Eight Cottages have been erected, and a large central building, giving full accommodation for 200 infants. By the generosity of friends, and by loans from the bankers, all the charges deemed right under the contract were paid upon the usual certificate from the architect; he refused to certify that more was due. The builders, however, presented a claim for £2,901 as yet due, and were awarded, after arbitration, a sum of £1,908. This, with the solicitor's charges, became a new and totally unexpected claim for a grievously large amount, and the demand for it was made peremptorily.

A special effort was required to satisfy this special demand, and the Committee are most thankful to announce that the following Twenty-one Friends came forward and raised the amount required in the following sums:—

A. Ballantine, Esq.	£105	Basil Woodd Smith, Esq.	£100
F. Barlow, Esq., Treasurer	100	Mr. Joseph Soul	100
James Betts, Esq.	100	George Stange, Esq.	100
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W. S. Gard, Esq.	100	John Kemp Welch, Esq.	100
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George Moore, Esq.	100	M. N.	100
Samuel Morley, Esq.	100	M. R.	100
M.P.	100	W. Y.	105
William Piper, Esq.	100		
Sir Titus Salt, Bart.	100		£2,115

The original debt, of large amount, still remains, and the Committee are most anxious for its liquidation, as they are obliged to limit the number of Children to be admitted, and confine themselves to the occupation of Four Cottages (though the eight are ready) until the charge for interest is reduced, and the income of the Charity left completely free for the maintenance of the Children. For this purpose further contributions have been received as follows:—

Thomas Harvey, Esq.	£25 0 0	J. C.	£20 0 0
C. E. Mudie, Esq.	50 0 0	Rev. R. T. Steven-	5 5 0
Thomas Stone, Esq.	25 0 0	Henry Bollen, Esq.	£26 5s. annually
Mrs. Peck	25 0 0	for four years	105 0 0
Geo. Palmer, Esq.	25 0 0	George S. Mea-	son, Esq., do.
Joseph Pease, Esq.	21 0 0		105 0 0
William List, Esq.	10 10 0		
E. B.	10 0 0		£479 5 0
H. H.	52 10 0		

The Committee solicit, and will thankfully receive, further CONTRIBUTIONS in aid of this Special Fund. Cheques should be crossed "London and County Bank" and with Post-office orders made payable to the Honorary Secretary, JOSEPH SOUL, Hon. Secretary.

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6 Egg Spoons, gilt bowls	9 0	12 0	12 0	13 6
2 Sauce Ladles	6 0	8 0	8 0	8 0
1 Gravy Spoon	6 0	8 0	8 0	9 6
2 Salt Spoons, gilt bowls	3 0	4 0	4 0	4 6
1 Mustard Spoon, ditto	1 6	2 0	2 0	2 3
1 Pair of Sugar Tongs	2 6	3 0	3 6	4 0
1 Pair of Fish Carvers	19 6	1 3 0	1 3 0	1 3 0
1 Butter Knife	3 0	4 0	4 0	4 3
1 Soup Ladle	10 0	12 0	14 0	15 0
1 Sugar Sifter	3 0	4 0	4 0	4 6
Total	9 1 6 11	16 6 12	8 6 13	2 6

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4-inch do. do.	15 6	12 6	5 0
4-inch fine do. do.	22 6	16 6	5 9
4-inch extra large do.	27 0	21 0	7 6
4-inch African Ivory do.	30 0	22 0	8 0
Do. with silvered blades	34 0	27 0	12 0
Do. with silvered blades	35 0	28 0	13 6
Do. with silvered blades	45 0	33 0	13 6
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